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TRANSITION;

OR,

THE PASSING AWAY OF AGES OR DISPENSATIONS, MODES OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION, AND CHURCHES;

BEING

AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF DEVELOPMENT.

BY

THE REV. AUGUSTUS CLISSOLD, M.A.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away."—Rev. xxi. 1.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."—Matt. xxiv. 25.

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TO THE READER.

The following remarks were written as an Address to The Society for Printing and Publishing the Works of the Hon. E. Swedenborg, on the occasion of the Fifty-eighth Anniversary. The Resolution they were designed to support was to the following effect—"That in the opinion of this Meeting, as the Church exists from the Word, and the quality of the Church with man is according to his understanding of the Word; so, there is reason to believe that in the present day, by a more spiritual interpretation of the Word, the Lord is effecting a transition from an old to a new Church, and thus resuscitating the most ancient Church."

As a Resolution of this kind involved some of the most important questions in theology, and had a peculiar relation to the present state of the Church, it was impossible to treat of it within the limits of

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an ordinary Address, and therefore only a portion of the ensuing remarks was read to the Meeting.

Momentous times have come upon Christendom, and times still more momentous seem to be in reserve. There is no reflecting mind acquainted with the theological literature of the day, but must be deeply impressed with the learning, subtlety, and plausibility with which, upon a very extensive scale, an elaborate attempt has been made, by men of high education, to overthrow the ancient belief in the Divine authority of the Scriptures; and to inaugurate within the Church a series of mental conflicts such as occur only in the transition from one age of thought to another.

"The tendencies at war," it has been said, "within the bosom of the Church of England, are but the general tendencies of the age, and extend far beyond the limits of her own pale. They are but the outbreak of the Antichristian spirit of the world against the Gospel of Christ, a wave of that great storm which is assailing the landmarks of faith all the world over, and threatening to submerge all distinctive truth with a flood of universal unbelief. The evil is not confined to England. In

Germany, in Holland, in France, in America, the same battle is being fought as among ourselves. Still less is it peculiar to the Church of England in contrast with other bodies of English Protestants."

Whatever may be the extent of the Antichristian spirit, it can scarcely be doubted that this is not the sole cause of modern unbelief. There are those who are sincerely seeking after truth; and who, in consequence of the general want of any fixed principles either in regard to the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures or their interpretation, are at a loss what to believe or not to believe. In the present state of theology they see no harmony between science and revelation. What the Bible is, what the Church is, what is the relation of the Bible to the Church and of the Church to the Bible, are questions which authority has failed to settle; but for the settlement of which vast preparations are being made by the Father of the Age to come.

Believing, as I do, that the alternative will be between modern Scepticism, and that view of Divine inspiration which has been given in the writings of Swedenborg; I have thought it desirable to treat the subject in its most comprehensive form, and to

present a brief outline of the relations of Divine Truth to the successive Dispensations and Churches upon earth, in the order in which these Dispensations have existed from the beginning to the present day.

With respect to the doctrine of Development, my object has not been to trace the development of particular doctrines within the Church; but the development of the whole Dispensation, of the Church itself, and of its mode of Biblical interpretation, from out of a lower form into a higher; for such a view alone can be commensurate with the extent of the transition which is now being effected.

In tracing out, however, the great movements of thought which from age to age have been controlled by Divine Providence, we must bid adieu to the passions, prejudices, and tumultuous theology of the day; and endeavour to rise into those serener regions where alone, apart from all external influences, we can calmly contemplate the Divine laws of Him who is the Beginning and the Ending, the First and the Last; Who alone, therefore, can teach us the real nature and end of all the revolutions which take place upon earth; and if, in pursuing

our course, we are led to behold a Light whose property it is both to create and to discriminate; to blind the eyes of some while it causes others to rejoice that they see; we may at least be reminded of the language of Him who was the Divine light of mankind,—"For judgment am I come into the world."

If with the beginning of every new Dispensation there is the beginning of a new creation; what if, at the very time that the Scripture narrative of the creation of the heavens and the earth is so resolutely called into question, and such ill-conditioned theories propounded in its defence; God should be about to unfold His mysteries—to shew to all parties, to the Church itself as well as to scientific societies outside of the Church, how it is that He creates a new heaven and a new earth; thus what is the real meaning of the first and second chapters of Genesis. It is thus only that the controversy will be ended.

With respect to the present Address, I would only observe further; that, on reperusing the remarks which are here made, I am sensible that there are some points upon which it might have been well to be more explicit; but my object has

been to avoid, as much as possible, entering into details. As to any inadvertencies into which I may have fallen, no one is responsible for them but myself; should there be any, however, which to some may afford either just or unjust occasion to cavil, it is hoped that, upon the whole, the Address will be useful in exciting others to serious enquiry, to a more spiritual interpretation of the Word of God than has yet prevailed; and in contributing something toward a knowledge of those principles on which alone we can rationally interpret the signs of the times, and ascertain the true place of the Christian Church, as it now is, in the order of the Divine dispensations.

Stoke Newington,
November, 1868.

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TRANSITION:

AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF DEVELOPMENT.

We are in a state of transition. The very depths of human thought have been broken up; new sciences have come into existence; the ark of the Church is visibly drifting from its former position, tossed about upon the waves, and with it the Bible itself contained within the ark. A new era of some kind or other is now commencing. Must we vacantly look around, unable to interpret the signs of the times? Or is the transition of eras controlled by Divine laws, a knowledge of which may be obtained, and enable us to understand our present position?

These are questions of the first importance in the present day, and we propose to answer them, by shewing that there is an orderly succession in the dispensations of Divine Providence; that these different dispensations have reference to the different modes of apprehending Divine Truth; that our present state is no other than a *transition* from one

dispensation to another, or from one mode of apprehending Divine Truth to another; and that this transition is in accordance with certain Divine laws, a knowledge of which is attainable, and may serve as our guide through all difficulties, unless we are already too wise to need to be guided.

Where, then, are these laws to be found? I answer: Is there any book which treats more profoundly of the subject of *transition* than the Word of God? "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Nay, we are told, the case is the reverse. Science has shewn that the heavens move only according to fixed laws, which insure their stability; and criticism has shewn that the words of Christ require to be "corrected by the event;" that what we have hitherto regarded as the Word of God is, either wholly or for the greater part, passing away with the age of ignorance and superstition; that consequently the prediction should rather have been—"Heaven and earth shall *not* pass away, but my words *shall* pass away." This, we are assured by some, is the nature of the transition we are now experiencing, and according to which the signs of the times are to be interpreted. The consequence is, that at the very outset we are supplied with two different orders of transition—the one, by Scripture and ancient tradition; the other, by that philosophy of modern science which is known by the name of *Positivism*.

These two orders we shall have to compare with each other; but before we do so, we draw your attention to the testimony of Scripture and ancient tradition.

Very recently this subject has assumed an almost unparalleled importance. Two new sciences have lately come into existence, respectively called *the Science of Language*, and *the Science of Religion.* There has been a growing desire to study history upon a far broader basis than has hitherto been the case; to know not merely the history of individual kingdoms and their political relation to each other, but what is the history of this world as a whole, and what is its relation to the Creator. The consequence has been, that the original condition of humanity, and its progress throughout the series of ages, have grown into momentous subjects of investigation. "To know what man is," it is said, "we ought to know what man has been."

In our search for this knowledge, the two new sciences referred to are of the utmost importance: they carry us back beyond even the limits of ancient history, whence we seem almost able to look into the pre-historic ages, and trace the origin and first growth of human thought; for, as an eminent modern writer observes:—"The growth of languages is continuous, and by continuing our researches backward from the most modern to the most ancient strata, the very elements and roots of human speech

have been reached, and with them the elements and roots of human thought."*

Indeed, the same eminent author observes—"There is to my mind no subject more absorbing than the tracing the origin and first growth of human thought." Accordingly, historical investigation has extended itself to the origin of existing nations and men. But, says Ewald,† "historical questions and imaginings logically stretch beyond these; nor can the ascending movement, once excited, again be laid to rest before . . . it has brought into view, under an historical form, the original condition of humanity, and the connection of mankind, and of the whole creation with the Creator; establishing on this subject a truth from which, as from a first cause, every further impulse of human history—that is, of man's development—may be traced at leisure."—This is imparting a practical importance to enquiries which have hitherto been regarded as speculative.

Now it is very obvious that the elements and roots of human thought necessarily lead to those of religion. Accordingly, "the Science of Religion," says the eminent writer above quoted, "may be the last of the sciences which man is destined to elaborate; but when it is elaborated, it will change the

* *Chips from a German Workshop; or, Essays on the Science of Religion.* By Max Müller, M.A., Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford. Vol. i., Preface, p. 9.

† *History of Israel*, p. 257. Ed. by Martineau.

aspect of the world, and give a new life to Christianity itself. . . . To my mind, the great epochs in the world's history are marked not by the foundation or the destruction of empires, by the migration of races, or by French revolutions. All this is outward history made up of events that seem gigantic and overpowering to those only who cannot see beyond and beneath. The real history of man is the history of religion:* the wonderful ways by which the different families of the human race advanced toward a truer knowledge and deeper love of God. This is the foundation that underlies all profane history: it is the light, the soul, and life of history, and without it all history would indeed be profane."†

Admirable sentiments! We propose to carry out this idea by adding to the discoveries hitherto made by the Science of Language and the Science of Religion, the statements which we find in the *Arcana Cœlestia;* and thus to fill up a gap in the primeval history of the human mind, which the Science of Religion regards indeed as a legitimate object of our endeavours, but which hitherto, through an ignorance of the law of Correspondence, it has not succeeded in accomplishing. This has

* *Essays on the Science of Religion*, Pref., pp. 19, 20.

† The French Revolution nevertheless marks an epoch in the history of Religion.

now become a matter of vital importance; for it is from the *First Age* of the world that all the other ages have proceeded, and in relation to which, therefore, they must be judged. Thus only shall we understand the age in which we are now living, and the age toward which we are moving onward.

The First Age of the World.

"Languages," says an eminent linguist, "are constantly changing; but never in the history of man has there been a new language. What does that mean? Neither more nor less than that, in speaking as we do, we are using the same materials, however broken up, crushed, and put together anew, which were handled by the first speaker, *i.e.*, the first real ancestor of our race. Call that ancestor *Adam*, and the world is still speaking the language of *Adam*. Call those ancestors *Shem*, *Ham*, and *Japhet*, and the races of mankind are still speaking the languages of *Shem*, *Ham*, and *Japhet*."*

The truth is, that, according to the modern Science of Language, all the existing nations of the earth with their diversity of languages can be traced up to three several races of mankind,—the *Semitic*, the *Aryan*, and the *Turanian*. To these three races pertained originally three different languages, how-

* *Essays on the Science of Religion*, vol. ii., p. 254.

ever since infinitely diversified; but inasmuch as these three languages contain certain elements in common with each other, they are said to shew the descent from one common language spoken by one race of mankind in the first or primeval age of the world. It is thus that we arrive at the supposed primeval language of Adam.

With respect to the early ages of the world it has indeed been said, that—"In Genesis the *Four Ages* have never assumed the form of a theory, as in India, Persia, or perhaps in Greece. If we say that the period from Adam to Noah is the first, that from Noah to Abraham the second, that from Abraham to the death of Jacob the third, that beginning with the exile in Egypt the fourth, we are transferring our ideas to Genesis; but we cannot say that the writer of Genesis himself laid a peculiar stress on this fourfold division."*

In comparing, however, the Hebrew, Greek, and Hindu traditions on this subject, another eminent scholar observes—"The Hebrew tradition, on the other hand, possesses high excellence, in that it accurately distinguishes and bounds the Four Ages according to their intrinsic nature, so that we see clearly why *four*, neither more nor less, are assumed; how each of them differs intrinsically from the rest, and has its meaning only in its own place and order. Their succession is not determined by a mere change

* *Essays on the Science of Religion*, vol. i., p. 152.

in general mutual relations, each containing merely its definite space, its numbers, and its greater or less degree of virtue; but each possesses, independently of its relation to the others, an external boundary and an *internal life and character of its own*, which make its existence in this particular form possible only this once; and together they include the whole domain of historical traditions."*

Whatever may be the reason for this conclusion, as deduced from the literal sense of the narrative in the book of Genesis, we shall see that the distinction of ages is more especially marked out in the spiritual sense ascertained by the science of Correspondence. In the meantime it is important to bear in mind the following remarks:—

"As far as we can trace back the footsteps of man, even on the lowest strata of history, we see that the divine gift of a sound and sober intellect belonged to him from the very first; and the idea of a humanity emerging slowly from the depths of an animal brutality,† can never be maintained again. The earliest work of art wrought by the human mind—more ancient than any literary document, and prior even to the first whisperings of tradition—the *human language* forms an uninterrupted chain from the first dawn of history down to our own

* Ewald's *History of Israel*, p. 260, Martineau's translation.

† *Essays on the Science of Religion*, vol. ii., p. 8.

times. We still speak the language of the first ancestors of our race; and this language, with its wonderful structure, bears witness against such gratuitous imputations."*

"If we analyse any word," says the same eminent linguist, "its last radical elements, those elements which resist further analysis, are pre-historic, primordial, older than anything human in the realm of nature or the realm of thought. In these words, if carefully analysed, is to be read the history of the human mind, the gradual progress from simple to mixed modes of thought, from material to abstract conceptions, from clear to obscure metaphors."†

* In the *Arcana Cœlestia* we read indeed of the Pre-Adamite state being like that of "*wild beasts*," art. 286, 841, 774, 908, 1038: but this expression does not mean what is commonly understood by *animal brutality*. It was in their state of spiritual humiliation that the men of the most ancient church acknowledged themselves to be like *wild beasts* before regeneration; that is to say, persons whose affections were natural, like those of animals, before they were made spiritual. There was then no hereditary evil. The statements of Swedenborg reconcile the two opposite theories concerning the First Age, as an age of ignorance and an age of enlightenment. The formation of language is no evidence upon the subject, as it does not reach so far back as the Pre-Adamite state; for before the period of enlightenment mentioned by Müller, there was really an age of ignorance and external innocence. How the human mind was elevated out of this state into a state of celestial wisdom, has already been described in my Tracts on *Inspiration and Interpretation*, to which the reader therefore is referred.

† *Essays on the Science of Religion*, vol. ii., p. 255.

As the analysis of language leads upward to some primordial race antecedent to the Semitic, Aryan, and Turanian, so, in like manner, do the traditions which are recorded by these languages. The earliest tradition is the one concerning *the Four Ages of the World*, celebrated by Hesiod, but having existed long before among the Persians, Hindus, and Hebrews. These all have recorded a primordial age of purity and innocence, and have "worked out the conception of a gradual decline of the human race, from the primitive perfection of the first age to the second, third, and fourth. These facts force us to recognize the traces of a primary tradition which was given before the separate existence of such nations as the Hebrews, Greeks, and Hindus, and from which they all drank in common;" and as the traditions concerning these ages can be traced to a period before the influx of other Eastern stories had commenced, "their source must reach back beyond the histories of the separate nations then existing, into that obscure primeval period of the existence of one unknown but early civilized nation, which was afterwards dissolved into the nations of that day, but left many wonderful relics as traces of its former existence."*

Now, as the analysis of languages has thus led up to one primitive language belonging to one

* Ewald's *History of Israel*, p. 257.

primitive race of mankind, and as in this primitive language are discoverable the traces of primitive thought, it has been presumed that we are in possession of the key to the original *religious consciousness* of mankind; that we may consequently trace the history of this consciousness from its beginning through its various states to the present time; and thus arrive at the history of the revelation of God, or of the *religious intuitions* of the human mind throughout all ages of the world.

Let us present some idea of how this has been attempted by some of the learned in modern times, in order afterwards to compare it with the corresponding statements in the *Arcana Cœlestia.*

Religious consciousness, in the shape of a common view of the relations of man to God, has its oldest expression in language:* the elements of the primitive language, as actually ascertained by research, indicate the ethical conceptions of those who formed the language: we thus arrive unmistakeably at certain primeval ethical conceptions. We see that there are elements of the primitive language which clearly indicate the ethical conceptions of those who formed the language; that "there existed in the human mind, from the very beginning, something, whether we call it a suspicion, an innate idea, an intuition, or a sense of

* Bunsen's *God in History*, vol. i., p. 236.

the Divine:" that "something Divine was discovered in everything that moved and lived:" that, "although the Divine presence was felt everywhere, it was impossible in that early period of thought, and with a language incapable as yet of expressing anything but material objects, to conceive the idea of God in its purity and fulness, or to assign to it an adequate and worthy expression: children cannot think the thoughts of men:" that "there is no word expressive of any abstract quality which had not originally a material meaning:"* that "in the first epoch phenomena are coined into sounds, as symbols of ideas, and man's consciousness of God is expressed in sacred legends and rites:" that "it was by a slow process that the human mind elaborated the idea of one absolute and supreme Godhead; and by a still slower process, that the human language matured a word to express that idea:"† that consequently no original revelation was made all at once to mankind, for no language was as yet formed capable of conveying it: that in the First Age revelation from God, and consequently the religious consciousness of man, was gradual and progressive. Whatever that religious consciousness may have been, we may be certain that it was a something

* *Essays on the Science of Religion*, vol. i., p. 238, *et seq.*; vol. ii., p. 153.

† Bunsen's *God in History*, vol. i., p. 39.

which does not exist now,—for it was a something from which the succeeding ages fell away, and continued to do so till the introduction of Christianity.

Now this religious consciousness, according to the Fathers, was, in the primitive ages of mankind, developed into open vision; and the process of this development is thus described by an eminent writer, in a work entitled *God in History* :—

"In his waking consciousness, man carries on converse with the external world, and with himself, by means of his senses and reason. The senses convey sensations to him, to the extent corresponding to the power of his organism to react upon them: his reason converts sensation into perception, feeling into thought, the cry of pleasure or pain into an objective word. In this state alone is man capable of action or intelligent apprehension. When the activity of the senses and therefore especially of sight is suspended, the imitations of space fall away, and, in the highest degree of the slumber of the senses, also those of time. It is an established fact, that this state may in rare instances be superinduced by a spontaneous internal stimulus, without the exercise of another's will, and without the intervention of a dreaming condition. Now since all that exists in Nature exists also in Mind, and is destined to be exalted into mind, and since man is in very deed a partaker of the Divine Reason; there must be a clairvoyant condition of the human mind

corresponding to its waking condition, when directed to moral or spiritual objects. But this, far from acting prejudicially on the moral life, ought rather to promote it. Hence the proper prophetic state is the moral and spiritual enfranchisement of natural clairvoyance."*

This faculty of open vision, says the same author, is latent in our nature, and, when developed, leads to an intuition of the universe, or a perception of the moral order of the world.†

We thus see what are the conclusions with respect to the primeval religious consciousness of the human mind which have been arrived at in modern times, through the aid of the Science of Language and the Science of Religion. According, however, to the interpretations of the Fathers, the early chapters of Genesis treat of this very same religious consciousness, shewing its first germination, its development, maturity, and decline. Hence we have no less than three different sources of information upon this subject, — the Science of Language, the Science of Religion, and the spiritual sense of the early chapters of Genesis, derived from the Science of Correspondence. For this *spiritual sense* is one and the same with the *religious consciousness* of that age; and to deny the spiritual

* Bunsen's *God in History*, vol. i., p. 64.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 70.

sense is to deny the religious consciousness of that age.

The fact is, that for a knowledge of this religious consciousness, we need not have recourse to the Science of Language or that of Religion; it is given us in the spiritual sense of the early books of Genesis. But these two sciences are nevertheless of the utmost importance, as affording collateral and independent sources of information, and indeed a deeper insight into the primeval religious consciousness of mankind than even the books of Genesis themselves, if we deny their spiritual sense.

Certain it is, that it is not the mere scholar alone who is competent to enter into a subject of this kind; the inquirer must himself have a deep religious consciousness, if he would ascertain the origin and development of that which existed in the Golden Age.

Undoubtedly the Sciences of Language and of Religion stand, as sciences, upon their own independent basis; but this need not prevent us from comparing their results with those of the spiritual interpretation of Genesis; on the contrary, this spiritual interpretation, which itself is founded upon another science, viz., that of Correspondence, will throw very considerable light upon the results of the two other sciences.

Let us then proceed to the early chapters of Genesis, as explained by the Science of Correspond-

ence, and point out some of their relations to the Sciences of Religion and Language.

First of all, we have an announcement of the Dispensation—the spiritual and moral *cosmos* or order of things which God is about to introduce: —"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The expression *heaven and earth* is universally allowed to have been afterwards applied by the prophets to signify the internal and the external of the Jewish and Christian dispensations. As to the word BARA *(created)*, we are told in the *Essays on the Science of Religion* that, judging from analogy with other languages, it contains no trace of the popular meaning usually assigned to it, of *a creation out of nothing;* but signifies rather the simple conception of fashioning or arranging, that is to say, reduction into form and order. This is the meaning assigned to the word in the *Arcana.* Accordingly the first step in the description of the process by which the human mind is reduced to form and order, is the description of the state from which that process began—the state of *religious unconsciousness.* All is dark and void, till *light* descends from above, and enables the mind to make distinctions. But what light?

"To find* out how the words of the Old Testament were understood by those to whom they were

* *Ibid.*, vol. i., pp. 135, 136.

originally addressed, is a task attempted by very few interpreters of the Bible. The great majority of readers transfer without hesitation the ideas which they connect with words as used in the nineteenth century, to the mind of Moses or his contemporaries; forgetting altogether the distance which divides their language and their thoughts from the thoughts and language of the wandering tribes of Israel."—If this be the case with regard to the language of the tribes of Israel, how much more with regard to language at a remoter period!

Now, if the expression *heaven and earth* designates a moral and spiritual *cosmos*, it is obvious that the whole six days' creation, as pertaining to it, must partake of the same character; consequently the *light* spoken of, is not that which is presented to the outward sense, but that which is presented to the religious consciousness. For, although every object of sense was presented by the sense to the intellect, yet it was to the intellect *of that age;* that is to say, to the intellect regarded as *ethical*,* or as exercised upon the nature and relations of good and evil; for intellectual abstractions, natural sciences, and political relations, as yet had no existence, much less any words to express them. And, though the course of modern education is from words to things, yet in the age to which we are

* Bunsen's *God in History*, vol. i., p. 203.

referring, it was from things to words—things as apprehended first by the senses and then by the ethical intellect; the consequence of which was, that all things were regarded in their relation to good and evil, thus in their relation to God. Hence it was that every object of sense had then in the mind what has been called "an inner soul;" that inner soul arising from no other than the intuition or sense of the Divine in all outward objects, which we are told that the primeval race must have possessed.

Hitherto this subject has been regarded as belonging only to the domain of mysticism; but recent discoveries relating to the origin of language have made it almost a subject of scientific investigation.

If, when man originally saw the *light* of the sun, he had no intuition of a Divine light, but merely aimed to express by articulate sounds the light conveyed to the bodily eye, he never could have elevated his mind above the level of the senses. So also with regard to all other objects of the natural world, as apprehended by the outward senses. Thought itself, in that age, would have been impossible; and man, as a rational animal, an impossible creation. It was in the relation of earth to heaven, and of heaven to earth, and of both to God, that the rational faculty found its first germ and development; and the laws of Correspondence are no other than the laws of this very relation. The objects of sense were

thus to man at that time in the place of words; with this difference between the two, that words are now at least mostly conventional, the inventions of men; objects of sense are the creations of God, and their true meaning as much of Divine origin as the very objects themselves. This being the case, Creation, though presented to the mind by the outward sense, was then contemplated from the inward intuition or the ethical intellect. All things were seen to be created by the Word, and to be the language of the Word. There was no need of intellectual abstraction, in order to arrive at the idea of moral or spiritual qualities. The consciousness of the good was derived not from abstraction but from influx: itself guided the intellect, not the intellect it; hence the intuition from inward Divine light, by which all things were seen in God and God in all things.

This intuition or perception varied in households, families, and tribes. So that it might be said that the very intuitions and perceptions were divided into so many corresponding genera and species;* and households and families, etc., were kept distinct from each other in order that the genera and species might not be confounded. Thus the order of families, etc., in those days had reference to the order of perceptions, as afterwards symbolized in the Twelve

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 483, 414, 471.

Tribes of Israel. These perceptions, however, had reference to Jehovah as the Infinite, invisible *Esse*, existing* in the Word of God in heaven, and as such manifested in the humanity of the church in heaven, which was to them at that time the one Divine Human, or the Divine Adam. Of course, whenever an influx of this kind from heaven should cease, this perception and intuition would cease also.

Such was the culmination of the mental faculties in the time of the Golden Age. Whatsoever they apprehended by any sense was to them a medium of thinking concerning the things of the Lord and His kingdom; and hence the delight which they derived from things worldly and terrestrial. Nay, further, when they thus contemplated the inferior and ultimate things of Nature, the objects of contemplation appeared to them as alive, or as if they were living; for the life from which they descended was itself in the internal sight and perception of the mind; and the objects presented before the eye were as images of that life; which images, although inanimate, were nevertheless thus animated in their sight, as will be further illustrated in the sequel.

Thus it was that a soul was given to the objects of sense. All objects were sacramental: the sign lived from the thing signified; and natural science, apart from spiritual perception, was a thing un-

* *Ibid.*, art. 4687, 920.

known, nay, in that state, a thing impossible. As in that age the outward sign was some object of sense; so in subsequent ages, in proportion as intuition or perception gradually ceased and the thing signified became lost, *objects* of sense gradually ceased to be the signs, and *words* were as gradually introduced. Hence it is that the inner life or soul was transferred from objects to words. Thus we speak even now of the "lively" or "living oracles of God;" and our Lord Himself says—"The words which I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." But the soul or life of the dead *letter* is no other than what in the primeval age was the soul or life of the dead *object;* for as to the inner soul, *i. e.*, the heavenly thought or affection signified, all objects regarded as external, whether of the animal or vegetable creation, were relatively dead.

Besides the celestial perceptions enjoyed in the waking state, the most ancient people, we are told, were instructed by dreams and revelations, and this even from infancy;* by which they were initiated into things good and true. And whereas these goods and truths were inseminated into the affections or voluntary part of their mind, they had from one general truth a perception of things innumerable, without the necessity of further instruction; so that from one general truth or principle they could intuitively perceive innumerable consequences.

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 597, 895, 1409.

It will naturally be asked, If there were no words at that time to constitute a spoken language, how was it that communication from one mind to the other was effected? The answer is, communication by spoken words is a communication by vibrations of the air or atmosphere; but there is a series of auras above the atmosphere, and it was by the modifications of one of these more nearly connected with the processes of thought, that thoughts themselves were then communicated; nor is it more wonderful that affections and thoughts should be communicated by a higher atmosphere more nearly allied to thought, than by a lower. Suffice it to say, that at that day the whole inward life flamed forth in the face; so that the very faces exchanged thoughts and sympathies, without the intervention of sounds. This mode of communication of mind is what Baron Bunsen attributes to a state of clairvoyance, which, he says, is a faculty latent even at this day in every mind, and is intimately connected with the modifications of the magnetic aura, as already observed.

What, however, shall we say of *writing?* Was there, in this primitive age, no more writing than speaking? The answer is, there was at that time a written language.* Thoughts in that day were themselves the spiritual words expressive of affections; thus they were the language of the affections and intuitions: consequently, any language express-

* *Heaven and Hell*, art. 260.

ing the thoughts must have been a language of the affections. Music itself has been described as the language of the affections; and as the thoughts are inward forms of affection, the original written language of the thoughts would be no other than a series of cursive outward signs expressive of the series of the forms of affection. Any other language would then have been unintelligible; even the Hebrew, as a series of consonants, would have been incongruous: and as such, it is very evident that as this mode of thinking gradually declined, so this mode of writing would gradually decline with it, and become unintelligible. It is, however, from this mode of writing that all other modes have been derived. Thus the Hebrew characters are like the Hebrew language the *débris*, or *detritus* of the original mode of writing, which degenerated from the curvilinear into the angular form. The alphabet most nearly allied to the primeval is said to be the Arabic. And as with the alphabetic characters and languages themselves, so with the very faculties of the human mind. In their present condition they are but the *débris* or *detritus* of humanity in its original form. That original form was the image and likeness of God: this image and likeness was called *Adam*. Before attaining to that image and likeness the most ancient people had not attained to humanity, and in this sense were *Pre-Adamites*.* How long they re-

* *Spiritual Diary*, art. 3390, 3391.

mained in this state we have no means of knowing; but the process described in the first chapter of Genesis might be comprised within the life of any individual man, even though the life should be that of its present ordinary duration. But though we cannot tell how long either the Pre-Adamite or the Adamic state continued, we are told that the Adamic Church itself occupied all the country, from the Euphrates on the one side to the river of Egypt on the other.

We have now described the state of the affections and thoughts in the First or Golden Age. It was an age of innocence and peace, because it was an age of love, viz., love to the Lord and love to the neighbour. This love was the life of men, and the life was the light of men,—light not as the result of dialectic processes of thought, but as coming from the life internal. Hence, also, the age was that of the supernatural; for the thoughts of men being angelic, men could exchange thoughts with angels; hence also the age was one of open vision. If any church could have laid claim to *indefectibility*, this was the one; yet its decline and fall, and hence its transition downwards into another of a lower order, are recorded in the Hindu, Persian, and Greek traditions under the name of the *Silver Age*,—traditions which are collateral evidence of the narrative recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures.

The process by which the Golden Age arrived at its maturity we have already seen. The cause of its

decline we are told will never occur again; for in that age there was no such thing as intellect severed from the will; the way to the intellect was only through the affections; thus the state of the intellect was dependent upon the state of the will, so that if the affections of the will degenerated, the intuitions necessarily became obscured. Impurity of the will obscured and perverted the intellect; and the intellect first obscured and then perverted, justified the state of the will. Self-wisdom was the necessary consequence of self-will. "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil," was the suggestion of the mind in that Paradise which was eastwardly bounded by the Euphrates. It was on the borders of the Euphrates that was built the tower of Babel, and afterwards that Babylon which presented to the world the most astounding realisation of the suggestions of the serpent. The insane spirit of Assyrian despotism is notorious, but it was inherited from antediluvian ancestors.

There are no means at present, we believe, of defining chronologically the period at which the decline of the First or Golden Age began, and continued down to the commencement of the Second or the Silver Age, which succeeded immediately after the Flood. The *Arcana** however records seven stages of decline. The celestial state being that of celestial affections flowing from within and ruling the

* *Art.* 282, etc.

intellect, the *first* stage of decline was that of the intellect enlightened with a knowledge of heavenly things from without instead of from within, and in this state ruling the affections. The *second*, the loss of this spiritual knowledge, and the subsidence of the will and intellect into the natural degree, or what may be called natural good and truth, resembling the state of innocence and ignorance proper to the stage of infancy. The *third*, a decline from this state of even natural good. The *fourth*, a final loss of this state. The *fifth*, a return to the original state before the commencement of regeneration, followed by a corruption of truths concerning heavenly things; hence abundance of phantasies and direful persuasions. The *sixth* and *seventh*, inundations of violent passions, and perversions of heavenly loves into corresponding infernal lusts—a state described by a universal Flood.

Such are the gradations of descent from the primeval or Golden Age to the second or Silver Age, as stated in the *Arcana;* when a new Dispensation commenced known as the *Noachian.*

We now proceed to the posterity of the Adamic Church.

Second Age of the World.

In treating of this Age, we would first observe, that the term *Adam* is a generic name, signifying

Man, and not merely some individual man. It occupies in the Scriptures the same place which the term *Humanity* does in some of our modern treatises of philosophy; the latter speaking of the early religious consciousness of *Humanity*, the former of that of *Adam*. Hence the names *Seth*, *Cain*, *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Irad*, etc., are as much nouns of multitude as that of Adam; being names of the different generations descended from Adam, and hence also of the churches which succeeded each other down to the time of Noah; for thought in that age was religious thought, which was that of families and tribes; although more and more declining in the course of time from that of the primitive age, and in its decline dividing the original Adamic Church into a variety of other churches.

The Adamic Church of the primitive age was the original holy Catholic Church; the churches which followed were relatively, what in the present day is called, heretical and sectarian; and more or less so in proportion as there remained among them less or more of the primitive Catholic Church. It was only in virtue of these *remains* that the several succeeding churches had respectively any claim to be considered a church; and it is in virtue of these *remains* from the original Catholic Church down to the present day, that there has been always a church upon earth, and that in this respect there has never failed to be a Catholic Church. Particular churches upon

earth have perished; but in virtue of *remains* there has always been a Catholic Church. How, and in what sense, we shall explain as we proceed. In the present case the *remains* were not those of actual angelic perception but of moral integrity of life, and also of doctrine originally derived from angelic perception.*

All languages, being in modern times discovered to be of genealogical descent, are themselves classified genealogically, and are traced upward to three different races,—the Semitic, Aryan, and Turanian; but these three contain the traces of one primitive language belonging to the antecedent age, as before observed. Now this antecedent age is the Golden, not in its maturity but its decline; for at first, in the Golden Age, language though written was not as yet phonetic. How then was it, in the decline of the Golden Age, that the oral language of that age orginated?

We have stated that in the First Age objects were in the place of words; and by the Law of Correspondence expressed affections, and forms of affection or celestial thoughts. In proportion as these celestial thoughts disappeared, the objects of the external world would lose their meaning: as such they would cease to be a language: the sign would have lost the signification; it would consequently cease

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 530, 608, etc.

to be a sign, and as such to be a medium of thought: in other words, the knowledge of the Law of Correspondence would be lost. In this case, it is obvious that other signs would be required to take the place of the former; for although the writing of the most ancient people was yet in existence, still it expressed forms of thought which were gradually disappearing. As yet there was *written* tradition, but no *oral* tradition; and unless some other mode of communicating thought could have been discovered, there would have been neither written nor oral tradition; for the written characters expressed forms of thought which were dying out as thought descended into a lower sphere; hence the necessity of another style of writing, containing probably some remains of the former, to express the new order of thought.

How then were these new signs to be obtained? As yet there is no evidence of sounds having been articulated by man.* The breath of the body was tacit precisely because it was one with the breath breathed into the soul by God, which was not tacit nor indeed involuntary. From this internal breath it was that proceeded internal speech, and internal speech is thought; in other words, thought is an internal language. Hence it is that the man spoke inwardly before he spoke outwardly. It was from the Divine aura breathed into man from God that man spoke

* See *Note* in the *Appendix*.

inwardly, *i. e.*, that he had the power of thinking heavenly thoughts, and articulated his affections in thoughts as he articulates sound in language. How then is it that this internal speech passed into external speech? We answer, that there is no phonetic language now extant, adequate to express the thoughts of which man was originally conscious. The breath of God or Divine aura transmitted to man through angels, and from which man originally thought, gradually ceased to descend into the mind; and man as gradually ceased to breathe or to think from this source. Having lost his spiritual breath he became spiritually dead: there was no longer any angelic motive power from within to animate, thus to initiate or control the respiration from without. Disorderly affections produced disorderly motions of the heart, disorderly respiration, and hence disorderly functions of the whole physical system, ending in maladies producing suffocation and ultimately death.—"All flesh had corrupted its way before God:"—"the earth was filled with violence."

This is the state signified by the Flood; but a state of this kind could not be favorable to the origination or even the advancement of language;* and, therefore, it was only in some stage of the transition or decline from the inner to the outer life, from the first dispensation to the second, that pho-

* See *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 607, 608.

netic language had its origin, or that articulate sounds produced by the outer respiration gradually came into use to express the new order of thoughts.

It is not to be supposed, then, that down to this time man had always been in an ignorant and barbarous state; or that he had to find out now for the first time the truths to which he had to give utterance. On the contrary, the written *remains* of the profoundest wisdom of a former age were still before him; and although the writing in which they were recorded was gradually becoming antiquated and obsolete, the new language of sounds was becoming subsidiary; and in proportion as it came into use, would gradually introduce a new alphabet, and a new mode of communicating thought more suited to the new but degenerated quality of the religious consciousness.* In this manner would arise a new oral and written language, probably the one called pre-eminently in the present day *Semitic;* and a new order of thought resulting from the predominance of the rational over the voluntary faculties.

Now we are told that the first words of the new phonetic language were nouns, and qualities of

* Inasmuch as this degenerated religious consciousness indicated a degenerated humanity, this humanity was no longer called *Adam*, but rather *Enos*. (See *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 439.)

nouns as verbs.* But in the primitive age we have seen that *objects* were in the place of *words*, and that qualities were indicated by objects. The articulated sound, then, would express the object, the object the quality; hence an articulated sound would be found to express *gold;* no adjective need be invented to express the quality, for the knowledge of Correspondence being only on the decline and not yet obliterated, the designation of the age by a metal, such for instance as the expression *Age of Gold*, would be sufficient to express the quality of the age. So also with regard to the expression *Age of Silver*, *Age of Copper*, *Age of Iron*, and so forth. It is in consequence of this original Law of Correspondence that in the primitive languages substantives would at first easily prevail over adjectives. Now would arise *oral tradition*, and also new written traditions, proceeding from the oral.

As a general rule, we are told that in history the age of poets is followed by an age of collectors. "We see," say the *Essays on the Science of Religion*,† "in

* "Nor is it in the power of language to express originally anything except objects as nouns, and qualities as verbs. Hence, the only definition we can give of language during that early state is, that it is the conscious expression in sound of impressions received by all the senses."—*Essays on the Science of Religion*, vol. ii., p. 54. This theory is suggested, however, without relation to the Science of Correspondence.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 17.

the ancient and spontaneous literature of India, an age of poets followed by an age of collectors and imitators, that age to be succeeded by an age of theological prose writers, and this last by an age of writers of scientific manuals." . . . "Acosta* tells us that the Indians were still in the habit of reciting from memory the addresses and speeches of their ancient orators, and numerous songs composed by their national poets. As it was impossible to acquire these by means of hieroglyphics, or written characters, such as were used by the Mexicans, care was taken that those speeches and poems should be learnt by heart. There were colleges and schools for that purpose, where these and other things were taught to the young by the aged, in whose memory they seemed to be engraved. The young men who were brought up to be orators, themselves had to learn the ancient compositions word by word; and when the Spaniards came and taught them to read and write the Spanish language, the Indians soon began to write for themselves, a fact attested by many eye-witnesses."

These remarks may serve to illustrate what is said in the *Arcana Cœlestia* concerning *Enoch*, as designating an age of collectors; and also what is said concerning oral tradition. Probably it is to the race of Enoch that we owe our present written tra-

* *Essays on the Science of Religion*, vol. i., p. 322.

ditions concerning the Adamic Church and the Flood. The posterity of this Church, we are told,* collected their wisdom from the traditions of their forefathers, and framed it into doctrinals which composed the Word of the Ancient Church after the Flood. From these doctrinals the Ancient Church acquired a knowledge of things internal, from which however they afterwards fell away. Among the written traditions deciphered from the then antiquated writings of the Most Ancient Church, or else committed to writing from the oral traditions of former generations, were the book of *The Wars of Jehovah*, and the book of *Enunciations*, both of which are now lost, though one of them is said to exist in the present day among the people of Tartary.

Besides these sacred Semitic traditions, there are certain traditions belonging also to the Aryan race. "It† will be difficult," we are told, "to settle whether the Veda is the oldest of books, and whether some of the portions of the Old Testament may not be traced back to the same, or even an earlier date than the oldest hymns of the Veda. But in the Aryan world the Veda is certainly the oldest book, and its preservation amounts almost to a marvel." Now there is no more remarkable

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 519, 521, 1241.

† *Essays on the Science of Religion*, vol. i., p. 5.

feature in the most ancient literature than its mythological form; and hence the origin of *Mythology*, and the study of *Comparative Mythology*, have recently become matters of unusual importance. Two different origins have been assigned to Mythology. We shall first consider the one which is assigned in the *Arcana Cœlestia.*

"With the ancients* it was the customary manner of writing to introduce things as it were discoursing together; such as wisdom, intelligence, the sciences, and such like; as also to give them names whereby such things were signified. This was the origin of the gods and demigods of the old heathens, and also of the persons whom they feigned in order that they might describe things under an historical form. The old Sophi derived this custom from the Ancient Church, which was dispersed throughout a great part of Asia."

We have seen how in the Most Ancient Church all objects, in virtue of the Law of Correspondence, were invested with life: that life was spiritual life—the life of humanity or of the human mind, thus of *a person.* If the hymn of praise could say, "O ye children of men, bless ye the Lord;" so also it could say, "O ye beasts and cattle, bless ye the Lord," "O ye sun and moon, bless ye the Lord." Here is personification, because by the Laws of Correspon-

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art 4442.

dence these things are made to signify personal qualities. Accordingly upon this principle the *serpent* itself is personified, because representing the human mind as actuated by the qualities it signifies. Hence also affection is personified in *Eve*, and wisdom in *Adam;* and personification once introduced, the relations between the persons easily become those of historical narrative. We have therefore the origin of *mythology* set before us in the early chapters of Genesis; in which we see that what is called mythology had its first origin in the law of Correspondence. Abstract qualities were represented by things, or by concrete forms endowed with life. Even to this day we retain the expressions "living stone," "living waters," "living fountains;" and in Hab. ii. 11, we read—"The stone crieth out of the wall, and the beam out of the wood answereth." Fragments of traditions, founded upon this Science of Correspondence, were handed down among the Hindus, Persians, and Greeks. The *Arcana Cœlestia* contains the following examples from the Greek mythology:—

"The* ancient Sophi described the origin of intelligence and wisdom by a winged horse, which they called Pegasus; in that with his hoof he broke open a fountain at which were nine virgins, and this

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 7729.

upon a hill; for they knew that by a *horse* was signified the intellectual principle, by his *wings* the spiritual principle, by *hoofs* truth of the ultimate degree, where is the origin of intelligence; by *virgins* the sciences; by a *hill* unanimity, and in the spiritual sense charity; so in all other cases."

The science of the ancients was thus very different from the science of modern times. The former had reference to the correspondences of things in the natural world with things in the spiritual, hence to the knowledge of God and of heavenly things. What passes in the present day under the name of science, such as Natural Science, and under the name of Philosophy, such as that of Aristotle and others, was altogether unknown to them. The mode of thought which prevailed in the Silver Age is illustrated more at large in the following extract concerning the ancient Greeks, taken from the *Arcana*:—

"They* assigned the name of Helicon to a mountain, and by it they meant *Heaven*. They assigned the name of Parnassus to a hill, and by it they meant *Science*. They asserted that a flying horse, which they call Pegasus, broke open a fountain with his hoof. They called the sciences *virgins*, and so forth; for they knew from correspondences and representatives that a *mountain* denoted heaven;

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 4966.

that a *hill* denoted that heaven which is beneath, or which is with man; that a *horse* denoted the intellectual principle; that the *wings* with which he flew were things spiritual; that a *hoof* was the natural principle; that a *fountain* was intelligence; that the three *virgins* who were called *Graces* were the affections of good; and that the virgins who were named the virgins of Helicon and Parnassus were the affections of truth. In like manner they assigned to the *Sun* horses, whose meat they called *ambrosia*, and drink *nectar;* for they knew that the *Sun* signified celestial love, *horses* the intellectual things that are thence derived; *meats* celestial things, and *drinks* spiritual."

Now it is obvious that in simple narratives of this kind, commonly called mythological, might be conveyed the profoundest truths; for the truths do not lie upon the surface of the expressions but are latent within. If now those truths be ignored by the present age, and nothing be left but the outside of the narrative, any primitive age which adopted this method of writing must necessarily appear in the present day an age of ignorance; and for this reason, that we have lost the key to the mode of thought and thence to the religious consciousness of that age. This leads of course to an inverted estimate of the order of ages; for if we ignore the interior truths which these narratives are meant to convey, we find no Platonic or Aristotelian philo-

sophy on the surface to challenge our attention, no logical series of argumentation, nor any announcement of the grand laws of Nature such as modern science discloses; the consequence is, we place our own age of philosophy, and science, and mechanical arts, far before what appears to us to be only an age of mythology; although to this mythological age, so called, far profounder truths concerning God and heavenly things might be known than to our own age of philosophy, science, and mechanism.

Hence it is that the deepest truths relating to the origin, progress, and decline of the spiritual life of man recorded in the first three chapters of Genesis, have disappeared from our intuition; simply because the spiritual life, and hence its intuition, have both been lost; and being lost from out of our consciousness, we are unable to perceive them in the narrative—all that we see is something about the creation of the outward world, about the first man and woman, and prodigious things about a talking serpent, and a submersion of the earth in a universal flood, which we cannot reconcile with our modern discoveries in geology and astronomy, or in general with those of natural science. Hence we are gravely reminded of our own superior enlightenment in the present day, by such statements as the following:—

. . . . "*The* Fall* is the ground on which the

* *Tractatus Theologico Politicus*, by Spinoza. Note by the Editor; p. 100.

whole dogmatic scheme of the Christian redemption, as now understood, reposes. It seems to be an element in man's nature to imagine things better and more happily constituted in times gone by than at the present hour; best of all, therefore, in times of the most remote antiquity; whence the idea of a primeval state of innocence and bliss. But *natural science* leads to other conclusions. Evolution, development, progress, not decline, is the history we read in the records of creation. Man, when he was called into being on this earth by his Almighty Maker, may have been as perfect as we now find him; most probably he was less perfect, and very certainly he was not more perfect, than he now is."

Here then is an appeal to *natural science* to supersede statements of truths relating to *spiritual life.* Now it is certain, that a man may be profoundly skilled in natural science who has little or no knowledge of God, or of a spiritual life. The Silver Age was one in which there may have been little or no knowledge of natural science, as at present so called; and yet by the aid of the science of Correspondence, there was, as we learn from the early chapters of *Genesis* spiritually interpreted, a profound knowledge concerning the nature of God and of the spiritual life; indeed nothing shews the fact of the Fall of the human mind more evidently than the loss of this knowledge, and the substitution in its place of *natural science.* For a

man might be most highly skilled in natural science who might resolve a Deity into the mere forces of Nature, and deny the existence of a future state. At all events, knowledge in natural science might be combined with profound ignorance of God; and on the other hand, ignorance of natural science with a profound knowledge of God. In the latter case, however, if this knowledge of God were obliterated, there would remain neither philosophy, science, nor mechanical art, as memorials of the state, which would therefore be regarded as having been one of unqualified ignorance; whereas in the former case, obliterate the knowledge of God and of heavenly things, and Positivism might still remain to tell of the wonderful progress and enlightenment of the human mind.

It is true that in modern times some may seek for mysteries where there are none; but* in the times of the ancient church men did not apply themselves to the sciences so much as they do at this day, but to profound and deep thoughts which they expressed in historical series. In illustration of this remark, we may refer to what has been said in the present day concerning the Hindus:—"They shut† their eyes to this world of outward seeming and activity, to open them full upon the world of

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 605.

† *Essays on the Science of Religion*, vol. i., pp. 66, 67.

thought and rest. . . . . There never was a nation believing so firmly in another world, and so little concerned about this. . . . The only sphere in which the Indian mind finds itself at liberty to act, to create, and to worship, is the sphere of religion and philosophy; and nowhere have religious and metaphysical ideas struck so deep root in the mind of a nation as in India. The shape which these ideas took amongst the different classes of society, and at different periods of civilization, naturally varies from coarse superstition to sublime spiritualism. But, taken as a whole, history supplies no second instance where the inward life of the soul has so completely absorbed all the other faculties of a people."

Combine this state of mind with a traditional law of Correspondence more or less understood, and there is no difficulty in arriving at least at one origin of mythological narrative. But there seem to be both a genuine and a spurious mythology; and the origin of what we shall call the spurious, has been thus accounted for—"It has been* fully proved that mythology is simply a phase and an inevitable phase in the growth of language; language being taken in its proper sense, not as the mere outward symbol, but as the only possible embodiment of thought. (?) Everything, while language passes through that peculiar phase, may

* *Essays on the Science of Religion*, vol. ii., p. 162.

become mythology." In our study, then, of Comparative Mythology we ought carefully to distinguish between the mythology founded upon the Law of Correspondence, and that which arises out of certain phases of history and of the growth and development of language; for in progress of time the two become blended together, and are not always easily distinguishable; yet the one is genuine, and the other spurious.

For instance: we are told* that long before Europe had any of the nations that now live in it, men talked of the things they saw and heard in a way very different from our way of speaking now. "Knowing very little about themselves, and nothing at all of the things which they saw in the world around them, they fancied that everything had the same kind of life which they had themselves. In this way they came to think that the sun and stars, the rivers and streams could see and feel and think, and that they shone or moved of their own accord. Thus they spoke of everything as if it were *alive;* and instead of saying, as we say, that the morning comes before the sunrise, and that the evening twilight follows the sunset, they spoke of the sun as the lover of the dawn or morning who went before him, as longing to overtake her, and as killing her with his bright rays which shone like spears."

* Cox's *Manual of Mythology;* preface, p. 10.

Now it is obvious, that in this case objects are invested with natural life, not with spiritual life; and that this process originates from the childhood and ignorance of the human mind. Consequently, the mythology which had its origin in this state is altogether different from that which had its origin in the Science of Correspondence. This distinction has been sadly forgotten by modern writers; many of whom, even the most learned, seem to think that all mythology had the like origin, viz., either in language, history, or imagination; and are utterly unconscious of such a law as that of Correspondence. "Everywhere," we are told, "poets attribute life to the things which they see and hear around them: the sun is for them a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run his course."* Upon the same principle are interpreted the words—"Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all ye stars and light,"—words which are very differently understood by the heathen poet and by the Christian interpreter. Dr. Davidson† remarks, that myths have been divided into *historical* and *philosophical;* and that philosophical myths were "those very ancient opinions devised by human genius respecting abstruse subjects, presented in an historical form that they might be better submitted to the

* Cox's *Manual of Mythology*, p. 8.

† *Introduction to the Old Testament*, vol. i., p. 174.

eyes of other men." The historical form, as we have shewn, arose from the personification; the personification, from the endowment with life; the endowment with life, from Correspondence. It is in the doctrine of Correspondence that oriental forms of expression, however, now degenerated into mere figures of speech, had primevally their real origin. The Silver Age had to learn this Correspondence intellectually from the traditions of their forefathers; the Golden Age learned it from no traditions, but from inward perceptions of the truth derived from heavenly affections. Relatively therefore to the Golden Age, the Silver Age may be called an age of reason and intellect.

The decline of this age is marked by the decline even of this knowledge of Correspondence: the thing signified began to be lost, because it was of a spiritual nature. The love of things spiritual began to decline, as the love of earthly things began to predominate. The result was, that the outward sign only remained, and sanctity was attributed to the sign apart from the thing signified. Hence the origin of Idolatry. The two phases of religious consciousness may be illustrated by the following expressions—"The stone crieth out of the wall, and the beam out of the wood answereth;" (Hab. ii. 11.) Here is the life originally assigned to objects by a knowledge of the law of Correspondence. On the other hand—"Woe unto him that saith to the wood,

Awake: to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach:" here is the life assigned to objects by an ignorance of the law of Correspondence (Hab. ii. 19, 20.) This decline it was from knowledge to ignorance which initiated the Third or the Copper Age. The territory throughout which this decline prevailed, was nearly the same with that of the Most Ancient Church, but perhaps somewhat more extensive; viz., Assyria, Mesopotamia, Syria, Ethiopia, Arabia, Lybia, Egypt, Philistia, even to Tyre and Sidon, thus comprising the whole land of Canaan.

Ewald regards *Noah* as the *Adam* of the new historical epoch, and as in name and in fact the impersonation of the idea of a renovated and better world; but we have stated that the name *Adam* was not the name of an individual, but is generic, like the word *homo*.

According to the *Arcana*—"From* the first chapter of Genesis as far as the twelfth, or rather to the account of Heber, the narratives are not matters of true history, but compositions in the form of history, signifying, in the internal sense, things celestial and spiritual."

A modern critic observes—"The† more competent judges of these matters have long since resolved, that the interval between the first and second of the progenitors of mankind rests upon no his-

* Art. 1403.

† Donaldson on the Fragments of the Book of *Jashar*, p. 99.

torical foundation. For, among others, H. Ewald shews, that the ten or seven appellations of Patriarchs, which, as by a catena, connect Adam with Noah, do not signify real persons, but are symbolical designations of properties."

There is therefore a coincidence between the statements of Swedenborg and those of modern critics in regarding the names in the early chapters of Genesis as the names not of individuals but of collective bodies of persons. According to the *Arcana*, the* names of Shem, Ham, and Japhet are, relatively to Noah, specific; they are the names of those who existed historically, not as individuals, but as religious races or tribes, thus also as churches, distinguished by the particular form of their religious consciousness, or by their doctrinals; just as religious bodies or denominations are designated by their respective kinds of teaching in the present day. It was customary† with the most ancient people to give names, and by names to signify things, and thus to frame a genealogy; so that

* The same is the case with Cain, Abel, Seth, Enoch, etc. With respect to *Enoch*, he is celebrated in ancient traditions as the patron of knowledge, and as the inventor of writing. If we regard the name as signifying a class, it answers exactly to what has been said above of the office of collectors in Eastern countries.—*Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 519, etc. See also Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. *Enoch*. *Genesis of the Earth and Man*, p. 3.

† *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 339, 1083.

forms of worship taught by the church, or churches, might be considered in a genealogical point of view. Hence it is that doctrines, whether heretical or orthodox, have their genealogy as well as languages. When, therefore, the geographical distribution of Shem, Ham, and Japhet, is described by authors, we are to understand the distribution of those particular forms of religion which, at that time, the names respectively suggested. For instance, of Shem we are told in the *Arcana* that it was the most spiritual or internal of all the churches, or religious bodies, which existed in the Noachian age; that the Semitic church was originally nearly such as our true Christian Church: that the ancient church, of which the Semitic was a branch, did not in internals differ in the least from the Christian Church; that its religious consciousness was the same with our own, and that this church differed from us only in externals, such as those of ritual. These rituals in after times became gradually separated from the things they symbolized; hence arose idolatrous religious services, and with these the downward tendency to the Third or Copper Age. Ham was a more external form of religion than Shem; Japhet less degenerate but more external than Ham. These three were in the relation to each other of charity, faith, and works. Canaan was the most corrupt of all.

Without, however, entering further into the details of this decline, indicated by the order of

the names, we shall merely observe; that many ritualistic expressions may have been in use before the corresponding ritual itself; upon the principle, that in the beginning internal things would have to be expressed by external. *Sacrifice* is a ritualistic word; but its spiritual meaning existed before any corresponding ritual, just as it now exists after it. In the earliest times the expression *self-sacrifice* would have been understood in its spiritual sense; but in proportion as the human mind sank more and more into a sensuous state, the word itself might come to signify the religion of Moloch, or of Juggernaut, or of Suttees. We need not suppose, therefore, that when sacrificial expressions were made use of in the first and second ages of the world, there actually existed at that time in every instance a corresponding ritual; for doubtless, although the ritual came to be established in after times, it was only by degrees, in proportion as the religion became more and more external, or expressed itself more externally. The same is true with regard to the term *burnt-offering*, which, to those who were spiritually minded, would have originally expressed, by the law of Correspondence, a spiritual idea long before it came to be actually embodied in ritual.

This circumstance would naturally explain both the origin of sacrifice and the abuses to which it was subjected; how it was that a truly spiritual

idea may have given rise to an external rite; and how the external rite in process of time came to supersede the spiritual idea, so much so, indeed, that even to this very day the internal meaning of the external Levitical services is all but entirely lost, nay, the very principle itself of interpretation made a subject of ridicule. This being the case, it was a matter of vital importance that the ritual should be precisely and minutely described, and as precisely observed; for it was in ritual that Divine Truth had now for the most part its expression; and by careless or corrupted ritual mankind would have lost even this outward safeguard of Divine Truth, and thus even the remotest connection with that Church in heaven with which man was originally in intercourse. It is impossible to account for the minuteness of the Levitical ritual, except upon this principle. This was also the reason why from time to time there were raised up individuals for the re-organization and reformation of ritual. Of these we are told that Heber was the first; and the ritualistic services which he collected and arranged with the aid of the ancient writings of Enoch, were the foundation of the Levitical laws; and this is the reason why they who observed these forms of Divine worship were themselves originally called *Hebrews*, after his name.*

* *Shem* was the name of the first and most internal church under

Third Age of the World.

In consequence of the inherited tendency to decline, the religious consciousness of which Heber, as an historical person was individually the type, was of a lower order than that of the race of Shem; for what was originally intelligence in the Noachian Church, had now degenerated into mere science;* so that wisdom, intelligence, and science, are the three stages of transition or decline through which the Three Ages have correspondingly passed. The truths of the Ancient or previous age are now simply remembered or known, but not understood; and this external knowledge is embodied in corresponding rituals. This kind of external worship began to prevail first in Syria and Mesopotamia;†

the Noachian dispensation; it became gradually more external in the race of *Arphaxad;* more still in that of *Salah*, and afterwards still more in that of *Heber;* so that the form of worship which was first commenced by Heber was genealogically derived from that of Shem; and as the ritual of Heber was transferred into the Mosaic law, we see the reason for which Shem was said to be "the father of all the children of Heber." In this way we may dispense with the objection of Dr. Colenso, who says, when speaking of the Jewish race, that we still call them "the Semitic race, though we no longer believe that they are derived from Shem, as the Bible states."—*Natal Sermons*, p. 349.

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 1342.

† *Ibid.*, art. 1238, 4680.

but in process of time diffused itself through several other countries, particularly through the land of Canaan. This was the form of religious consciousness which was then the most prevalent; and therefore gave the character to the age. As Heber was the first institutor of this religion, it was called after his name; and is known as that of the Church of the Hebrews or Hebrew Church, just as in the present day we speak of the Lutherans, or of the Lutheran Church.

The externals or rituals of the Hebrew Church were those which related* to worship in high places and groves; also to statues, to anointings, to priestly offices of various kinds, with the statutes or ordinances relating to them. The internals of the worship were doctrinals derived from the Antediluvians; more especially the correspondences collected by the class of writers represented by Enoch, which were then formed into doctrinals, constituting the Word proper to that age, the spiritual sense of which, however, was now lost. There were introduced, moreover, various additions and alterations, particularly in regard to ritualistic services; more especially sacrifices such as burnt-offerings, which were unknown to the Semitic Church and to all others except to those represented by the posterity of Ham and Canaan, were now permitted; in order

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 1241.

to prevent, as far as possible, the sacrifice of human beings, or of sons and daughters. It was from the Hebrew Church that this mode of worship was propagated among the Gentiles,* and descended to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and ultimately to Moses.

As with the sacrifice, so with the altar; for the altar, as a principal representative of the Lord, was regarded as a fundamental† of worship in the Hebrew Church: all its proportions, materials, and appurtenances were representative; and on the termination of the Hebrew Church, both the altar and its services were among the *remains* which passed onward to the Jewish; although the signification of them was then entirely lost. The same was the case‡ with regard to the laws relating to marriages, sojourners, and circumcision. Hence, the statutes, judgments, and laws which were given to the Israelitish and Jewish nation were not new, but mostly such as had been before in the Second or Silver Age, that is to say, in the Church of Noah so called, and were thence handed down to the Hebrew Church; by which means the Hebrew Church retained the *remains* of the former Church with which it was thus in continuity; so that the con-

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 2180.

† *Ibid.*, art. 4489.

‡ *Ibid.*, art. 4444.

tinuity of a Church upon earth was not interrupted.

For this reason it was that all who adopted this Hebrew form of worship were called *Hebrews*,* whether they were lineally descended from Heber or not. Jehovah, as worshipped under this form of religion, in which were handed down the remains of the Golden Age, thus of Divine Truth or the Word which was from the beginning, was called "the God of the Hebrews;" the land of Canaan "the land of the Hebrews;" and Abraham himself, as adopting this form of religion, renouncing his idolatry, and acknowledging the God of the Hebrews, was himself therefore said to be "a Hebrew." Hence, in obeying the call to take possession of the land of Canaan, he was only taking possession of a country in which the Hebrew religion had previously prevailed, and for the continuance of which he himself was to be made the medium. With this form of religion Balaam† also was familiar; for he acknowledged the God of the Hebrews as his God, and offered sacrifices, and had come from Syria, the original country in which the Hebrew religion had first been instituted.

Now, it was on the Euphrates, a primeval boundary of Paradise, and in the time of the He-

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 1343, 4517.

† *Ibid.*, art. 1343, 1366.

brews a boundary of Syria, that Babel was built, and that self-idolatry first began to manifest its Babylonian form. Self-love takes away all perception of good, self-intelligence all intuition of truth, and thus reduces the doctrine of Correspondence merely to external rituals, or to forms without life, and hence to idolatry. It was from this origin that idolatry sprang in Syria, and diffused itself throughout the land of the Hebrews. The Hebrew Church thus became full of idolatrous practices, and adulterated the worship of the true God by the introduction of the idols of other nations. This Third Church commencing the Third Age, called the Age of *Copper* because it began with those who retained in their external worship a principle of charity* in its lower form of *natural good*, began to decline from this state till it fell still lower, and ultimately into mere sanguinary and idolatrous ritual. Even at the very time that Abram was called from Chaldæa, to be the means of preserving the remnants of the Hebrew Church in Canaan, Terah, the father of Abram, worshipped one God,† Abram another, and Nahor another.

The origin of these gods was as follows :—

"The statues‡ which were set up in ancient

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 4680, 10,354.

† *Ibid.*, art. 1356.

‡ *Ibid.*, art. 4580, 3727.

times were either for a sign, or for a witness, or for purposes connected with worship. Those which were for purposes of worship were anointed, and then were regarded as holy, and where they were set up worship was performed; thus in temples, groves, forests, under trees, and in other places. This ritual became representative from this circumstance, that in the most ancient times *stones* were set up in the boundaries between the families constituting nations, lest these should transgress those boundaries to do evil to each other, as in the case of Laban and Jacob (Gen. xxxi. 52). Not to transgress boundaries to do evil to each other, was with them a law of nations. And whereas the stones there were in the boundaries, the most ancient people, who saw what was correspondingly spiritual and celestial in everything, when they saw these stones as boundaries, were led to think of truths which are the ultimates of order. But their posterity, who in earthly objects beheld less of a spiritual and celestial principle and more of what was worldly, began to think holily of them only from a veneration derived from antiquity; till at length the posterity of the most ancient people who lived immediately before the Flood, and no longer in earthly and worldly things saw anything spiritual and celestial objectively, began to sanctify those stones by pouring drink-offerings upon them, and by anointing them with oil; and then these stones came to be

called statues,* and were dedicated to purposes of worship. This custom remained, after the Flood, in the ancient church which was representative, but with this difference; that at that time statues served them as means conducive to internal worship; for infants and boys were taught by their parents what they represented, and were thereby led to a knowledge concerning holy things, and to be affected with what they represented. From this cause it was that, with the ancients, statues were for the purposes of worship in temples, groves, and forests; also upon the hills and mountains. But when the internal principle of worship with the Ancient Church altogether perished, and men began to account external things holy and divine, and thereby to worship them idolatrously, then they erected statues each to his own god. And whereas the posterity of Jacob was most prone to idolatrous worship, therefore they were forbidden to set up statues, and to have groves, and even to perform any worship on mountains and hills; and were gathered together in one place, at first where the ark was, and afterwards where the temple was, thus at Jerusalem. Otherwise, each family would have had its own externals of religion, and its own idols, which it would have worshipped; and thereby the representative of a Church could not have been established with that nation."

* Hence probably the origin of the god *Terminus.*

We thus see the state of religious consciousness in the Hebrew Church, before the Jewish Church began to be raised up in the time of Abraham. With him was partially inaugurated the Fourth or the Iron Age of the World. Abram was divinely called to emigrate into the land of Canaan; because it was from the beginning the land of *correspondences;* and as such consecrated to the cultivation of spiritual knowledge. Mountains, hills, woods, rivers, valleys, cities, trees, fountains, etc., had there originally all of them heavenly significations; thus conjoining the church on earth with the church in heaven and with the Word. Hence the journeyings of Abraham could still signify spiritual things, just as did the journeyings of the Israelites through the wilderness; although in his time spiritual knowledge was generally lost. Indeed, the obliteration of this knowlege was requisite, in order to prevent its being profaned; and this was the reason why the posterity of Abraham were* kept so long in bondage in Egypt, till the very name of Jehovah the God of the Hebrews was obliterated from among them;—why the whole of that generation were led about till they perished in the wilderness, for those who had been brought up in Egypt could not be recovered from their idolatry; and why there could be

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 4447, 4288, 4311, 4289, 4847, 5136, 4129.

no Church among them, but only ritualistic services representing a Church. This representative of a Church is obviously a lower form of religious consciousness than a representative Church; for in the former there is little or no moral principle; in the latter there is a certain form of charity toward the neighbour. The moral remains of the Hebrew Church* were transferred to the Jewish especially in the Decalogue, but were preserved among the Jews only through their being enforced by external punishments; for even as to a future state of existence they were profoundly ignorant; although in process of time some knowledge upon this subject grew up among them.

From these remarks it will be seen that the Jewish Church† was not any new church, but only a resuscitation of the Ancient Church which had perished. It is called, indeed, a New Church; but only upon the principle, that old truths are called new after they have passed into oblivion, and been revived.

"In‡ regard to this circumstance, that the new Church, which was established anew among the posterity of Jacob, appears in its external face like to the ancient, it is to be noted, that the statutes, judg-

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 576.

† *Ibid.*, art. 4835, 4444.

‡ *Ibid.*, art. 4449.

ments, and laws which were commanded by Moses to the Israelitish and Jewish nation, were not alien from the statutes, judgments, and laws which were in the Ancient Church; such as those relating to betrothings and marriages, to servants, to the animals which were proper for food and which were not proper, to the purifications, to the feasts and tabernacles, the perpetual fire, and several other things; also to the altars, the burnt-offerings, the sacrifices, the libations, which were received in the other ancient Church which was from Eber, and which, it is very manifest from the historicals of the Word, were known previously to their being commanded to that nation. To shew only that altars, burnt-offerings, and sacrifices were thus previously known, it is related concerning Balaam, that he ordered seven altars to be built, and burnt-offerings and sacrifices of bullocks and rams to be offered upon them (Numb. xxiii. 1, 2, 14, 15, 29). And, moreover, it is said in many places concerning the nations, that their altars were destroyed; and also concerning the prophets of Baal, whom Elias slew, that they offered sacrifice. Hence it may appear manifest, that the sacrifices which were commanded to the people of Jacob were not new; thus neither were the rest of the statutes, judgments, and laws. But, inasmuch as these things were made idolatrous among the nations, especially by this, that by such things they worshipped some profane god, and thereby turned

into things infernal those which represented what was Divine, besides superadding several others; therefore, in order that the representative worship might be restored, which was that of the Ancient Church, those things were revoked. Hence it may be seen, that this new Church, which was instituted among the posterity of Jacob, appeared in its external face similar to the Ancient Church."

Although, therefore, statues and the rituals dedicated to them, had been permitted in the Noachian Church, and at first in the Hebrew Church also, they were not permitted in the Jewish; as their symbolical import had now been lost, and instead of being a medium of worship, they would only have been objects of worship. The consequence is, that while by far the larger number of representatives which had previously prevailed in the Hebrew Church and the Church before it, were permitted in the Jewish, there were some which were forbidden or were greatly modified, and some previously unknown in the Noachian Church permitted. Thus* in the representative Church, whether of Noah or Heber,† Divine worship had been celebrated on mountains and in groves; the worshippers turned their faces to the sun in the east, or to the moon and stars: worship was celebrated also in tents or

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 4288.

† *Ibid.*, art. 4433.

tabernacles; but these practices having become idolatrous, in the Jewish Church they were not allowed; the only mountain on which worship was performed being that of Jerusalem or of Mount Zion; and if the face was ever turned to the East, it was at the Temple.

As to the internal signification of the rituals which were preserved to the Jews, there was indeed a tradition among some of the more learned Jews, that these rituals signified something of a most holy nature, though what it was they knew not; for that nation, with but few exceptions, placed the sanctity of the Sacred Writings entirely in the letter. Their veneration of the letter had its origin not in love, but in lust—the lust of domination and of self-love, in esteeming themselves chosen above all the nations of the earth. Hence the external sanctity of the letter was united to their religious principle by an illegitimate conjunction,* represented by a species of whoredom; being the same in principle, though not so interior, as was afterwards represented by Babylon in the Revelations. Nevertheless, it was by means of this idolatrous principle that the religious ceremonials of the Law were preserved; and consequently that a correspondence and connection were maintained between the Church in heaven and the Church upon earth,

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 4874, 4868, 4811.

by means of the external sanctity of representatives.

There could, nevertheless, be no essential or internal union of the Church in heaven with the Jewish Church; for the Jews themselves were, as a nation, in no charity toward the neighbour. They deemed it allowable to hate an adversary,* indeed, to hate all who were not of their own religion; often in warfare treating them with the utmost cruelty and barbarity.

The remains of the Most Ancient or Adamic Church which existed before the Semitic, were indeed still in the land of Canaan, among the Hittites and the Hivites†—nations which were allowed to remain in Canaan after it was given to the posterity of Abraham, in consequence of this circumstance. But, nevertheless, they were not originally chosen instead of the Jews; because it was foreseen that these remains would gradually disappear and die out from among them, and that they could be perpetuated by no other nation.

We have now seen on what principle and to what extent the primeval or Adamic Church was continued into the Noachian, the Noachian into the Hebræan, the Hebræan into the Jewish. In the sequel, we shall have to shew how the Jewish

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 4750, 4314, 4903.

† *Ibid.*, art. 4447, 4432.

Church was continued into the Christian; and how the Christian will further be continued into that Church of the future which cometh down from God out of heaven. Such is the order of the transition of Ages, Churches, or Dispensations, according to the testimony of ancient history and of the Scriptures.

We have thus brought into view, under an historical form, what in modern language has been called the original psychological condition of humanity; the connection of mankind and of the whole creation with the Creator; establishing on this subject those primal truths from which the transition of Ages is to be traced; and in relation to which the present condition of the human mind is to be judged; if it be true that—*in order to know what man is, we must first know what man has been.**

The Hebrew representative Church instituted by Heber, and the Jewish representative of a Church initiated by Abraham, were more nearly allied to each other in externals than either of the others;† the main difference between the Hebrew and the Jewish form of religious consciousness being, that, in the case of the latter, the religious consciousness was still more external; the natural good which was in the Hebrew mind having disappeared in the Jewish.

* *Chips from a German Workshop*, by Max Müller, vol. ii., p. 4.

† *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 1343, 4700, 4680.

Having thus taken a survey of the order of Ages from the beginning, we must now compare it, before we proceed further, with that which has been propounded by the modern Philosophy of Science known by the name of *Positivism;* and which is confidently maintained by its advocates, to be founded upon "the fundamental law of the evolution of humanity." It will, therefore, be desirable to present it to your attention in their own language.

"Humanity,"* it is said, "has three stages; the Theological, the Metaphysical, and the Positive. Whether we examine the history of nations, of individuals, or of special sciences, we find that speculation always commences with supernatural explanations, advances to metaphysical explanations, and finally reposes in positive explanations. The first is the necessary point of departure taken by human intelligence; the second is merely a stage of transition from the supernatural to the positive; and the third is the fixed and definite condition in which alone knowledge is capable of progressive development."

Accordingly, in the first or Theological stage, it is said, the mind regards all effects as the production of supernatural agents, whose intervention is the cause of all apparent anomalies and irregularities.

* *Lewes's Biographical History of Philosophy. Second Ed.*, p. 656; also vol. ii., *Third Ed.*, p. 616. Auguste Comte.

Nature, in this case, is regarded as animated by supernatural beings. The lowest condition of this stage is that of savages, viz., Fetichism; the highest is, when one Being is substituted for many, as the cause of all phenomena.

In the second or Metaphysical stage, which is transitional, supernatural agents give place to abstract forces or personified abstractions, supposed to inhere in the various substances, and to engender phenomena. The highest condition of this stage is, when these forces are brought together under one general force, denominated Nature.

In the third or Positive stage, the mind, convinced of the futility of all inquiry into causes and essences, applies itself to the observation and classification of laws which regulate effects. The highest condition of this stage would be, to represent all phenomena as the various particulars comprehended under one general law.

The first or supernatural stage is said by Positivism to commence with the unknowable. The mind has to learn its impotence and the limits of its range, before it can content itself with the knowable.

The second or Metaphysical stage is said to be only a modification of the Supernatural, substituting metaphysical entities for supernatural beings; as such, it is only transitional to the Positive stage. The Supernatural stage is concerned with the unknowable; the Metaphysical with the unknown.

In either case, it is said, no progress can be made, because no certainty is possible.

Lastly, the Positive stage concerns itself only with the discovery of laws, deduced from observation and experiment made by the senses. Instead of perpetually finding itself, after years of gigantic endeavour, return to the precise point from which it started, Science finds itself year by year, and almost day by day, advancing step by step; each accumulation of power adding to the momentum of its progress; each evolution, like the evolutions of organic development, bringing with it a new functional superiority, which in its turn becomes the agent of higher developments. Such is the system of Positivism.

Here, then, are set before us the two different tables of the successive stages of the human mind; in other words, the two different orders of transition;—the one, that of Scripture and antiquity; the other, that of modern Science. Observe, now, the correspondence between the two, and then the antagonism.

The correspondence is remarkable; for in both cases the first stage is that of the affections and of the supernatural; the second is relatively that of reason or intelligence;* the third is relatively that

* See *Apocalypse Explained*, Vol. i., art. 70; also *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 2576.

of the evidence of the senses. In this respect the two orders of succession confirm each other. But now comes the difference; for, in regard to quality, the two are the inversion of each other: the first, or that of Scripture, is an order of involution, envelopment, and descent; the second, or that of Positivism, an order of evolution, development, and ascent. The first, therefore, is the order of a gradual fall; the second is the order of a gradual rise; consequently the second contradicts the first, or the whole scheme of Redemption; for the doctrine of Redemption is founded upon the historical fact of the Fall. Though the first stage be in both cases the age of the supernatural, yet in Scripture it is that of profound wisdom; in Positivism it is that of profound ignorance and superstition. In both cases the third stage is that of evidence afforded by the senses; yet in Scripture it is that of comparative ignorance and superstition; in Positivism it is that of superior knowledge; for, as we are told—"While the first principles of philosophy are to this day as much a matter of dispute as they were two thousand years ago, the first principles of Science are securely established, and form the guiding lights of European progress."

Now, Science is founded upon observation and experiment.

THIRD AND FOURTH AGES OF THE WORLD.
THE SPIRITUAL AND NATURAL WORLDS.
ENVELOPMENT AND DEVELOPMENT.

It is in consequence of these lights of European progress being employed to throw their rays—the rays of Science—upon Theology, that the doctrine of the Fall is either ignored, or else is so interpreted as not to be a Fall, but to be a real step in the progress of humanity; and, moreover, the primitive age of the world being that of the supernatural, and hence regarded as only an age of ignorance and superstition, all traditions derived from this source are said to be fabulous, and consequently also the early history of Scripture.

Now, the supernatural is a nature above Nature, the heavenly nature above the earthly; but the supernatural being declared to be unknowable, and certainty to be attainable only in the natural, Science alone is said to be capable of progress and development, Theology and philosophy incapable of either; and thus, while Science is said to pass on from one discovery to another, Theology and philosophy pass only from one dispute to another. Thus the standard according to which it is maintained that the progress of the age is to be reckoned, is the standard of Science, and not of Theology. Science must increase; Theology must decrease: for the

knowledge of God and of heavenly things being a knowledge of the supernatural, and that knowledge being said to be unattainable, the alternative is between superstition on one side and scientific materialism on the other. Already has commenced, under the influence of this system, but unconsciously so in many cases, an open disbelief in the spiritual or supernatural; and a destructive criticism of the Bible as the Word of God—criticism guided by the discoveries of science, or by the lights of European progress.

Well, then, is the progress of the age to be simply that of scientific discovery, or of what is called the philosophy of Science? Is Science alone to lay claim to development, and not Theology? Or, if Theology has its developments, are they such only as are borrowed from natural Science? Rather, our object will be to shew, that Theology has its developments as well as Science; nay more, that developments, in the higher sense of the term, are proper to Theology alone; that in this sense, natural Science, with all its discoveries, is incapable of development. For development is but the removal of envelopment. Development of ends and of causes is but the removal of their envelopment; for if causes and ends be hidden from us, it is in consequence of their being hidden by envelopments: the cause being the envelopment of the end; the effect, the envelopment of the cause. The natural world is in this

respect a twofold envelopment, which profoundly hides from us the knowledge of ends and causes. Being only a world of *effects*, it is, relatively to ends and causes, a world of *envelopments:* make what discoveries we may in the progress of Science, they are not developments in the higher sense of the term, but only a progress from one envelopment to another. Therefore, though we knew the laws of all natural phenomena, the primary constituents of all solar systems, the whole sequence of antecedents and consequents in the natural universe; let Science make what developments she may, she can never help us out of the order of effects, and thus of envelopments; and as development is but the removal of envelopment, it is obvious that, in claiming to be the source of all development, her claim is fallacious; for if ends and causes are hidden from her, as it is acknowledged, still they are hidden only by *envelopments.*

It is obvious, therefore, that the true principle of development must be sought in the doctrine that Creation is a series of envelopments, enfoldings, or involutions: this, however, is a scale of descent. To this corresponds a series of developments, unfoldings, or evolutions: this is a scale of ascent.

According,* then, to the Divine order of Crea-

* This account is taken mostly from the *Apocalypse Explained,* vol. vi., art. 1206, *et seq.*

tion, nothing in the natural world exists except from a spiritual cause; for no one thing can exist except from another, and thus finally from Him who is and exists in Himself, viz., God; whence also God is called *esse* and *existere;* JAH from *esse*, and JEHOVAH from *esse* and *existere.* Hence He is called The Highest or the Most Highest, that is, the Inmost; all creation being to Him relatively exterior or external, that is to say, relatively envelopments; whence the expression—"Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself." As the spiritual world is thus relatively external to the Deity, so* the natural world is relatively external to the spiritual; and as the natural world is and exists from the spiritual, so the spiritual world is the cause of the natural—a cause prior, superior, and interior; whence everything in the natural world is an effect from its corresponding cause in the spiritual. The spiritual world is thus the soul of the natural; and, apart from the spiritual, the natural is dead. Nature, therefore, in itself is dead; being created only in order that the spiritual principle may be clothed from it with forms which may serve for use, and in which it may terminate.

The reason why the spiritual is to be conceived as clothed with the material, is; because all things which exist in the world of Nature, whether belong-

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 2576.

ing to atmospheres, waters, or earths, or to all and each particular of these, are effects produced from the spiritual as a cause; and the effects act as one with the cause, and are altogether concordant; according to this axiom, that nothing exists in the effect that is not in the cause. But the difference between the two is, that the cause is a living force, inasmuch as it is spiritual; but the effect thence derived is a dead force, inasmuch as it is natural. From this circumstance it is, that in the natural world are such things as altogether agree or correspond with those which are in the spiritual, and that they can be fitly conjoined. Such is the reason for which, as before stated, Nature was created, viz., in order that by it spiritual essences might be clothed with forms which might serve for use.

The operation of the spiritual world into the natural is by *influx*. It is by influx that the connection between the two is established. Thus, in the case of vegetation, we see how vegetables* "successively grow in a regular process from their seed, even to the production of new seeds; just as if the earth knew how to dispose and accommodate her elements to the prolific principle of the seed; how from thence to bring forth a bud, to dilate the bud into a stem, from the stem to emit branches and clothe them with leaves, then to adorn them with

* *True Christian Religion*, art. 695.

flowers, and from the interiors of flowers to form the initiament of fruits; then to bring them to perfection, and by means of these, in order to continue the kind, to produce new seeds as a new offspring."

These wonderful phenomena of Nature are, by some, regarded only as a series of antecedents and consequents within the sphere of the natural world; the only reason for which is, that men are ignorant of the existence of a spiritual world* operating from within, and acting upon all and everything in the world of Nature, and on its earth, just as the human mind operates and acts upon the senses and motions of the body; and that all the parts of Nature are but as coats, sheaths, and clothing, which envelope spiritual things, and proximately produce effects corresponding to the end intended by God the Creator.

We see, then, that the series and order of Creation are a series and order of envelopments; so that man, being placed in this lower world, was placed in the lowest of the series of envelopments; and could ascend to heavenly knowledge only by casting off the envelopments; that is, by a process of development. Now, in order to the very existence of free-will, this process must have been voluntary. Here, then, was the law of *evolution:* according to which the human mind arrived at the celestial state signi-

* *True Christian Religion*, art. 695.

fied by the Garden of Paradise. From this elevation the Adamic Church fell, or began to decline; conformably to a succession of periods, states, or Churches in the history of mankind, which was a succession of envelopments: that is to say, a succession according to which the original Church became more and more external. This succession of states, or process of externalization, is thus referred to in the *Arcana Cœlestia* :—

"The* case of the Churches succeeding each other at particular periods, and of which it was said that one was descended from another, may be compared with that of fruits and their seeds; in the midst or inmost parts of which are contained, as it were, fruits of fruits, and seeds of seeds, from which the other parts that succeed each other in order, receive life. For as each part is further removed from the inmost centre toward the circumference, in the same proportion it partakes less of the essence of the fruit or seed; till at length it becomes a mere skin or covering, wherein the fruits or seeds have their termination. Or as in the case of the brain, in the inmost parts whereof are subtile organical forms called cortical substances, from which and by which the operations of the soul proceed. To those substances others succeed in order; first, the purer coverings; then, the denser; afterwards, the common

* Article 501.

coats called meninges, which are terminated in coverings still more common, and at last in the most common or general of all, which is the skull."

This process of envelopment of the spiritual within the natural, until the spiritual had gradually disappeared from the consciousness of the human mind, continued down to the end of the Mosaic dispensation, when it reached its utmost limit; so that the Law with the Temple and its services was one continued *envelopment;* the Gospel being enveloped in the Law, the New Testament in the Old, or the spiritual in the natural. Hence the saying of St. Augustine—"In* the Old Testament the New is enfolded; in the New Testament the Old is unfolded." The Old Testament therefore is an envelopment of the New, and the New is the development of the Old. This it was that caused Augustine to say, that Christianity was contained in the Old Testament from the very beginning; indeed it could not have been developed from out of the Old Testament, if it had not been there.

"What† is now called the Christian religion," says he, "has existed among the ancients; and was not absent from the beginning of the human race until Christ came in the flesh; from which time the

* *Commentary* by Archdeacon Wordsworth: *Book of Kings*, etc. Int., p. 24.

† *Chips from a German Workshop: being Essays on the Science of Religion*, by Max Müller, vol. i., Preface, p. 11.

true religion, which existed already, began to be called Christian. From this point of view the words of Christ too, which startled the Jews, assume their true meaning, when He said to the centurion of Capernaum, 'Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God.'"

Upon the same principle it is, that in the *Arcana Cœlestia** it is observed, that the Adamic Church was fundamental to the Jewish Church; that the Jewish Church was instituted that it might represent the Adamic; that the Jewish Church was not a new Church, but a resuscitation of the Ancient Church which had perished; that the Christian Church was one with the Church instituted among the Jews; the only difference being, that the former was internal, the latter external, as being only representative of what was internal; that the truths and goods of the Ancient Church relating to internal worship were represented in the externals of the Jewish Church, and hence in both cases were alike; thus, that the Adamic and Jewish Churches were *essentially* the same, and as to internals did not differ in the least.

Now, if the internals of the Jewish Church were the same with those of the Adamic, and if they had

* See articles 886, 921, 3727, 1083, 1823, 4835, 4868, 4449, 1241, 4489.

been aptly expressed by symbols at any period in the interval between the Jewish and Adamic Churches, it will follow, that there must have been prototypes of the Mosaic ritual in previous ages. Accordingly, it is observed in the *Arcana Cœlestia*,* as we have seen; that the statutes, judgments, and laws which were given to the Israelitish and Jewish nation were mostly not new, but such as had been before in the ancient church. These statutes, judgments, and laws were the *remains* or *remnants* of former ages, in virtue of which the continuity of the Catholic Church was preserved. Thus it was that the direct lineage of the Catholic Church began from the Adamic Church, thence proceeded to the Noachian, thence to the Hebræan, thence to the Jewish, thence to the Christian; whence it will continue itself into the Church coming down from God out of heaven. This lineage constituted the stem from which at different periods branched off innumerable other Churches to the Gentiles; all retaining at first, more or less, traces of the primeval dispensation, which became fainter with the lapse of time.

Such is the *rationale* of the doctrine above maintained by St. Augustine; it is the real foundation of all the spiritual interpretations by the Church, of the Mosaic Law; and he who denies this principle,

* Article 4444.

denies the doctrine of the continuity of the Church, and as such, the Catholicity of the Church; nay, he denies, as we have shewn above, those very laws of Creation into a knowledge of which the first Church was initiated.

We have observed that the Jews themselves, although they could see only the externals of the Law, yet preserved within their nation a traditionary school which taught similar tenets, and hence that there was something more in the Law than the mere outside envelopment. "It was supposed," says a modern writer, "that* the diction of the Bible, that is, the holy language of God, is superhumanly profound and significant, capable of involving all future progress and mental life, pregnant of marvellous and mysterious power; that it teaches many things at once; hints by one word at many truths; conceals a lesson in every sign; is designedly obscure, and frequently renounces current expressions that it may long baffle the efforts of human reflection and penetration, dimmed as these are by sorrow and suffering; but reveals itself at last to pious research; while the enigmas that remain unsolved will one day be disclosed by the light of the Redeemer,—views which were encouraged by the peculiar and indefinite character of Hebrew phraseology, and by

* *Commentary on the Old Testament*, by Dr. Kalisch, *Leviticus*, Part i., p. 102.

the indistinctness of many legal and ritual ordinances."—This view of the Bible was founded, we are told, upon the principle, that there is a necessary connection between the words of God and His works in Nature; for by his Word were all things created.

In this tradition, then, we see the last faint traces of the ancient doctrine of Correspondence; and the real origin of the Kabbalah, especially of the book *Sohar*, the chief object of one portion of which is to shew "the* profound and allegorical import of the Mosaic commandments and prohibitions." This idea was not borrowed from any form of Platonism; rather it is that from which Platonism itself descended. It was a tradition handed down from primeval times, through successive ages to the time of Moses; and thence from the Jewish to the Christian Church. It was thus that the Jewish Church was the envelopment of the Adamic, and thus that in the Jewish Church was contained the Adamic. This continuity of the Church is owing entirely to the principle of Correspondence: the Church which abandons this principle abandons its own continuity, and hence also that principle of unity, perpetuity, and catholicity in virtue of which the Church of the First Adam is the same with the Church of the Second; the First Church essentially the same with the Last. Wherefore, says the Lord, in reference

* See *The Kabbalah*, by Dr. Ginsburg, p. 80; also our *Appendix*.

to the succession of Churches upon earth, and the essential unity and continuity of all—"I* am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, the First and the Last; which was, and is, and is to come, the Almighty," (*pantocrator*,) the holder and the ruler of them all.

We have now brought down the order of transition, more especially to the time of the Jewish Age and Dispensation; and, in the observations which follow, propose to draw the attention of the reader, (1.) to the principles involved in the Transition of the Jewish into the Christian Dispensation; (2.) the Transition of the Jewish into the Christian method of interpreting Scripture; (3.) and lastly, the Transition of the present existing Church into the Church of the Future.

First, let us direct our attention to the principles involved in the Transition from the Jewish to the Christian Dispensation.

Fourth Age of the World.
Dispensations assumed to be Permanent.
Criterion of Development.

In regard to the principles involved in the transition of the Jewish into the Christian Dispensation, the subject becomes of the highest importance if the

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 4901.

present age be itself in a state of transition; for, as already observed, the transition involves the doctrine of development, and development that of Correspondence. Virtually this idea of transition is the same with that of modern philosophy, when it speaks of it as resulting from the laws of *the evolution of humanity.* We have accordingly seen, that it is in relation to envelopment and development, or involution and evolution, that the Dispensations of God have hitherto taken place; or that the order of the Ages has been disposed. It is upon this principle that the continuity and catholicity of the Church upon earth have, throughout its various phases, been maintained and preserved; and we shall see how the transition from the present form of Christianity to a still higher, will only exhibit one and the same Church from the beginning, pursuing at length a progressive course of development.

We have observed, that the development is of the natural into the spiritual; and, accordingly, Christianity itself is a Dispensation of development; tending to turn the course of the human mind in a direction contrary to that which it had pursued from the beginning of the Fall.

If the Word created all things, and the new creation at the introduction of Christianity was that of the Church, then the Church was created by the Word; and as the Church was created by the Word, so it is governed by the Word, and all the Divine

dispensations toward the Church proceed from the Word, and have relation to the Word. The Church and the Word, therefore, are inseparably connected.

Now the Latin term *dispensatio* is synonymous with the Greek οἰκονομία; and means, in its secular sense, the public economy of states; or, in general, their management, government, or administration. In a theological sense, it means the Lord's Divine government of His Church, or His Divine Providence toward the Church; this Divine Providence having especial relation to the course of *envelopment and development in relation to the Word.* This course, as we have seen, has not been uniform; but divided into periods called *ages*, in Latin *sæcula*, in Greek αἰῶνες or *æons.* The Hebrew word for *age* is *olam*, and is thus defined by Fürst:—"That which is wrapped up, covered over, concealed. Specifically *time*, the end of which is hidden; that is to say, is unknown and cannot be defined, whether in relation to the past or future. Hence also specifically *eternity*, the extremities of which are veiled, that is to say, there are none. From this word comes, according to some, the Latin word *velum*, and also *revelatio.*"

Now it is evident, that this Hebrew word *olam*, as implying that which is *wrapped up, covered over*, or *concealed*, expresses the idea of envelopment; and as such the character of the Ages from the Fall to Christianity. This harmonizes with that process of

development to which the Apostle Paul refers, when he speaks of the mystery made known to him by revelation,* "which in other ages was *not* made known unto the sons of men;"—"even the mystery which hath been *hid* from ages and generations, but now is made *manifest* to the saints;"† "for we speak," says he, "the wisdom of God in a mystery,‡ even the *hidden* wisdom, which God hath ordained before unto our glory;" that wisdom which the natural man receiveth not, because it is only spiritually discerned. It is very evident, that by the "hidden wisdom" perceived only after a spiritual manner, the Apostle was speaking of the Gospel as enveloped in the Law, the New Testament as enveloped in the Old, the spiritual as enveloped in the natural, but then undergoing a process of development. Upon the same principle, Augustine observes, that in the Old Testament the New is enfolded; in the New Testament the Old is unfolded. *In vetere Testamento novum latet, in Novo Vetus patet.*

Among some of the Jews there seem to have prevailed certain intimations to the same effect; thus on the words of Jeremiah—"In§ that he said a new covenant, he made the first old"—their ancient

* Ephes. iii. 3, 5. † Col. i. 26. ‡ 1 Cor. ii. 7.

§ See *Defence of Christianity*, by Bishop Chandler, vol. i., p. 271.

Targum and later Peruschim refer the fulfilling of this prophecy in Jeremy to the days of the Messias; and their old traditions in the Talmud and Midrashim comment upon it as follows:—"The law of Moses shall last no longer than the coming of the Messias;"—"The week the Son of David comes, the law shall be made new."—"God shall give a new law by the Messias;"—"Most of the festivals, oblations, and distinction of meats oblige but for a time, and shall cease under the Messias."

Notwithstanding scattered intimations of this kind, the general current of thought in the Jewish Church pursued a course directly contrary. Transition and perpetuity, identity and yet development, could not be reconciled in their minds. The spiritual being to them a nonentity, and the natural the only reality; transition from the natural to the spiritual was only transition from reality to unreality, from the substance to the shadow. Hence it was, that permanence and perpetuity were regarded as belonging only to the envelopment; and development was but "*perilous change*" and "*ungodly innovation.*" This very principle of the Jewish mind had been turned to account by Divine Providence, as one means of maintaining the existence of the Jewish Economy till the fulness of time. Until that period the admonition held good, even in the case of the universal envelopment, not to meddle with them that are given to change,—to stand upon

the old paths. Stubbornness, obstinacy, tenacity of old forms and ways of thinking were, in their day, as useful for the preservation of the Jewish Economy, as they were afterwards dangerous and destructive. The same qualities of character which, down to a certain period, had been the salvation of the Jewish Economy, ultimately worked its perdition. What was called fidelity to their institutions, was their ruin. When the Christian Dispensation commenced, of what use was it to tell the Jews that their own Dispensation had come to an end? What could be plainer from the language of Scripture than that their Dispensation was final? Were they not told that—"This* shall be a perpetual statute for all your generations;" that "God† would reign over them in Zion henceforth and for ever;" that‡ "He chose Zion for his habitation," and said, "This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein;" that§ He would "put his name for ever in that place;" that‖ "His eyes and his heart should be there for ever;" that¶ He would "bless them out of Zion;" that** He would "make the seed of David to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven;" that†† "to the seed of Abraham Canaan should be an everlasting possession;" that‡‡ He

* Lev. iii. 17.
† Micah iv. 7.
‡ Psa. cxxxii. 14.
§ 2 Chron. vii. 16.
‖ *Ibid.*
¶ Psa. cxxxiv. 3.
** Psalm lxxxix. 29.
†† Genesis xvii. 8.
‡‡ Isa. xli. 17; xlii. 16.

would "never leave them nor forsake them;" that* whosoever did not "hearken to the priest that stands before the Lord, should die" for his presumption; that† God commanded his people "to do all that they should be instructed by the priests to do;" that‡ "His Spirit remained among them;" that§ "the law of truth was in their mouth;" that‖ Jerusalem should "be called the city of truth;" that¶ the priesthood was ordained "to heal that which was sick, and bring again that which had strayed;" that** "the covenant made with his Levites, priests, and ministers should be as certain and perpetual as the day and the night;" that†† "the priesthood should be an everlasting priesthood, throughout their generations."

Take these promises in the literal sense, and can we wonder that the Jews believed, just as Christians in the present day believe, that there would be no such thing as development; that the dispensation was final; that the ordinances, statutes, and judgments of Moses were given to them once for all? For who could believe that the words, "this shall be a statute *for ever* throughout all your generations," could possibly be consistent with its becoming obsolete; that though Canaan

* Deut. xvii. 12. ‡ Haggai ii. 5. ‖ Zechariah viii. 3.
† *Ibid.*, xvii. 10. § Malachi ii. 6. ¶ Ezekiel xxxiv. 4.
** Jeremiah xxxiii. 20. †† Exodus xl. 15.

was to become an everlasting possession, the Temple and its services were all to come to an end, and the land be handed over to unbelievers? Even many Christian interpreters have thought that the language of Scripture, in its literal sense, is so explicit upon this subject, that, in order to verify it, the Jews must at some future period return to the Holy Land, and that there must be a revival, in some form or other, of the Jewish Dispensation.

It is obvious, therefore, that if the spiritual sense be obliterated, the literal sense affords little countenance to the doctrine of development; for development implies change, and the change would be regarded as that of the literal sense: the transition would be not from one sense to another, but of the very Bible itself; and if there was to be development, it would be that of the age independently of the Bible, and one which would effectually set aside its authority. Accordingly, says a modern learned author,* "the sacred writers professed to proclaim *final* truths, to which nothing was to be added, and from which nothing was to be taken off; and thus they fettered thought and research, and retarded human progress in its most important spheres."

The same writer, moreover, observes,†—"It

* Dr. Kalisch's *Commentary on Leviticus*, First Part, p. 282.

† *Ibid.*, p. 119.

must be absolutely denied that the authors of the Old Testament, and especially of the Pentateuch, regarded their laws and institutions as the *transitory germ* of some higher form to be unfolded in the lapse of ages, or as parts of a preparatory economy to be ultimately merged in some more perfect system; on the contrary, they looked upon them as *final* and *immutable* for all times, because embodying the sum of all truth and Divine wisdom. This is a cardinal point decisive on the question: the Old Testament repudiates all change as ungodly innovation; therefore it can never be employed for sanctioning the important and often radical modifications adopted in the New; the one cannot be regarded as the shadow or figure of the other: in spite of many points of contact, both are two distinct designs separated from each other by numerous and heterogeneous influences."

In the foregoing remarks, substitute the *New* Testament for the *Old*, and we have the very same argument urged by Christians against another Dispensation yet to come, which the Jews urged against Christianity. The present Dispensation, it is said, is no transitory germ of some higher form to be unfolded in the lapse of ages; it is final and immutable for all times; the New Testament repudiates all change as ungodly innovation. It is true that some interpreters of prophecy have thought otherwise; but let us hear how they are refuted.

"Mr. Mede* fairly admits, that the Christian Church is but a temporary sort of *make-shift*, set up because God would not be without a Church; but, that after the destruction of the Papal Antichrist and the restoration of the Jews, prophecy will—as we have seen above—have its entire fulfilment in the establishment of a *complete* Christianity. This too, as far as I have been able to inform myself, is the creed of all his followers; insomuch that some have openly maintained the notion, that Christianity is, as we now have it, to pass away, and to be succeeded by another and better dispensation."

To meet this view of the subject the writer argues from the Epistles of St. Paul, that this is the last dispensation. "If then,"† says he, "the whole mystery of God, as foretold by the prophets, has been so fulfilled, a most important result grows necessarily out of this: viz., that there is not in the hands of the Church, the legitimate means of any further development of God's holy will. We have already seen that to Christianity in principle, nothing can be added; because (1) it is in its own nature *perfect* and *complete;* and (2) because condemnation is pronounced against every one who shall either add to it, or take from it; or in any way alter or

* *An Enquiry into the Nature, Progress, and End of Prophecy*, by S. Lee, D.D., Regius Professor of Hebrew, Cambridge, Int., p. 93.

† *Ibid.*, p. 348.

corrupt its declarations as once delivered by the Apostles to the Church. In this sense, therefore, any attempt at further development, is *damnable.*"

Accordingly it is argued by divines, that there can be no new Dispensation; that the last times mentioned by the Apostle are either those of the Jewish dispensation, or those of the Christian dispensation itself as being the last; that Christ has promised not to leave the Church, but to be with it to the end of the world;—that He has founded it upon a rock, and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it;—that the fulness of time signifies only the period in which Christianity was first established; that the very idea of development implies an addition to the faith, and another Gospel; that if an angel from heaven comes to preach another Gospel, he is to be accursed; and that it is our duty to contend for the faith, as having been delivered to the saints once for all.

There is yet another argument common to the Jew and the Christian against any further dispensation. Whatever renovation of the Church is to take place, it is to amount only to an extension of the existing covenant. "The Hebrew prophets,"* it is said, "never expected or wished the sacrifices to be abrogated in the time of the Messiah. There lived, indeed, in the better minds of the nation, the hope

* *Commentary on Leviticus*, by Dr. Kalisch, p. 113.

that God would, in due time, conclude with Israel a new covenant; but this covenant was not meant to consist in a new law, but that the old one should become a truth and reality in the lives of men, after a complete remission of their sins."—So in like manner it is maintained in the Christian Church, that whatever renovation of the Church may take place in future, it will occur only under the present dispensation—that there will be no renovation of doctrine, no new church, no new dispensation; and if it be said that there are to be "new heavens and a new earth," the expression applies to a future state of existence and not to the present.

The origin of these arguments, common both to the Jew and the Christian, is to be found in the language of the prophecies, and may thus be stated in the words of Bishop Warburton,†—"All these prophecies concerning the introduction of the Gospel being delivered in terms appropriate to the Law, the Jews of that time would naturally, as they in fact did, understand them as speaking of the extension and completion of the *old* dispensation, rather than the extension of it by the introduction of a *new*."

The introduction of a New Dispensation could take place only on the principle of development; and the Jews in general concluded that, whatever might be the progress of the age under the Messiah, it would

* *Divine Legation*, vol. vi., p. 89.

be the result of extension, not of development. This is precisely the doctrine of Christians in the present day. That another and better dispensation should supersede that which was initiated by the Apostles, is as repulsive to many a Christian as the doctrine of another and better dispensation was to the Jew; and, as we have seen, for the very same reasons. In the meantime, the age progresses notwithstanding; transition takes place, not in the sense of extension, but of development; for the progress of *life* is the progress of development, not merely of extension; or, if there be extension, it is that of development.

In* the animal and vegetable worlds, the *evolution* of the complete organism from its germ does not consist in mere growth; for by such a process nothing would be produced but an enormous aggregation of simple cells, possessing little or no mutual dependence, like those which constitute the shapeless masses of the lowest *algæ*. Now this aggregation is the very extension of which we have been speaking. But this increase or extension is not development. In addition to *enlargement* there must be *development;* that is, a passage to a higher condition both of form and structure. The developmental change is seen in the transition of an organ from a lower to a higher condition. What, then,

* Carpenter's *Principles of Human Physiology*, p. 557.

in the apostolic age was the lower condition? That represented by the Jewish Church—the natural. What was the higher condition? That represented by the Christian Dispensation—the spiritual. The transition from the natural to the spiritual was a process of development. Can anything be plainer, than that the spiritual is not a mere extension of the natural, or the new a mere extension of the old?

How, then, did St. Paul meet the objection of the Jews, that the new covenant in the time of the Messiah was to be an extension of the old? "In* that he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old."—Well, then, does the old covenant continue when the new is introduced? We all know the answer,—"Now that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away." If the Apostle had once allowed the Jewish maxim to prevail,—that what is new cannot be true; and therefore that to make all things new, is only another way of saying that all are to continue old,—he could never have overcome the obstacles to the introduction of the Christian Dispensation. The Jew would have regarded it as his duty to contend for the Law once delivered to the saints, and the Christian to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints; but the two parallel lines would never meet. In the meanwhile Time would move on; and the transition of the Age

* Hebrews viii. 13.

would alone settle the question, whether the *end of the age* or dispensation, and the *end of the world*, meant the same thing. The Jews insisted upon it that they did: modern Christians do the same. Time refuted the Jew, and time will refute the Christian; for each believing his own dispensation to be permanent, and as such not to be succeeded by any other, they both follow the same method of interpretation, and believe the *end of the dispensation* to mean *the end of the world.* This error a pious writer thus frankly acknowledges:—

"Among* the things that once darkened my own mind on the subject of the Coming of the Son of Man, was the circumstance of the Second Advent being almost always put in connection with the *End of the World;* at least so it appeared by our version of the Scriptures. Concluding, as I then did, that the Dispensation under which we live was the final Dispensation, and that what we translate *end of the world*, meant literally the end of the world, I could come to no other than the generally received opinion, that there would be no other re-appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ till the day of the general judgment. Had the Greek word αἰῶν been rendered in our version by its nearest corresponding term in our language, viz., *age*, instead of *world*, it would have removed one great difficulty out of my way.

* Maitland's *History of Noah's Days*, p. 138.

"By the phrase '*end of the world*,' I would say, unhesitatingly, that we are not to understand that period when this globe shall be dissolved. . . . . We must understand, therefore, by this phrase, not the dissolution of the globe, but the end of a Dispensation or particular Economy upon it; and forasmuch as several of these have obtained by the Divine appointment, the expression, when it occurs, will mean the termination of one of these Dispensations of God with man; the closing or shutting up of one account with a view to the adjustment of it, and the opening of another in order to a progression in the Divine plan. Hence we find God has rarely permitted any one of His dispensations to extend itself over a very large portion of time."

The end of the Dispensation is thus distinguished from the end of the World; and its relation is not to the state of this material globe, but to the state of the Church: the αἰὼν is that of the Church and not of the Earth: it* relates to a moral, not to a material state of things. When, therefore, reference is made to the coming of our Lord in power, it is equivalent to a declaration that this coming should be a sign of the entire end of that *moral state* of things. Indeed it is admitted that αἰὼν and κόσμος cannot signify the same thing, as where the Apostle says κατὰ

* Dr. Lee's *Enquiry into the Nature, Progress, and End of Prophecy*, pp. 123, 135.

τὸν αἰωνα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου, what is signified is the *moral state* or period of the then existing world. So when it is said that by Him the *æons* were constituted or the worlds framed, what is meant is, "the Dispensations, the *moral* or *religious* appointments of the several periods, such as are distinguished not by the senses, but by faith through the Word." Accordingly, when we speak of the Golden Age, the Silver Age, the Copper, Brazen, and Iron Ages, these epithets refer one and all to the *moral quality* of the Age. The Age, therefore, has reference to the state of the *moral* and *religious* consciousness; and our Lord is called *The King of the Ages*, as especially controlling by his Providence these moral and religious states of mankind; or the states of the religious consciousness, hence of the interpretation of the Word of God, hence of the Church.—"Who* hath wrought and done it calling the generations from the beginning? 'I the Lord, the first and with the last—I am He.'—Who, I say, has ordained all these generations from Abraham, nay from Adam, to Hezekiah, and in like manner from him down to Christ, and will also ordain the end of the world—except it be God, who, as St. Paul says, is *King of the Ages*, *i.e.*, the Author, Creator, and Governor of the Ages; who by his Providence disposes the Ages in a certain series, and the things

* Commentary of Cornelius à Lapide, Isaiah xli., p. 341.

that are to happen in every age. . . . . 'I the Lord, the First and the Last,' as if he should say, I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending (Rev. xxii. 13). I am the I AM; before me there was no God, and after me there shall be none (Isaiah xxxiv. 10). As if it should be said, I create, preserve, dispose all the ages; because I am the First and the Last; I precede all the ages, and follow after them. I am He from whom, into whom, and around whom they all flow."

He is, then, The Word from whom, into whom, and around whom flow all the ages. "Christ* was the Beginning of a new world, both because he commenced a *New Church*, and a new people consisting of Christians and saints; as likewise because, in rising from the dead, he gave to his own the beginning of a new and blessed life, and commenced the assembly of the blessed. Whence in Isaiah ix. 6, He is called *The Father of the Age to come.*"

We have already seen in what sense, relatively to the Jewish Church, the Christian Church was called a *New Church.* Essentially they were one and the same. The Christian Church was only a development of the Jewish, and the Jewish the envelopment of the Christian. The transition of the Jewish Church into the Christian was only the casting off by the Christian Church of its envelopment.

* Commentary of Cornelius à Lapide, Proverbs viii., p. 181.

Transition of Modes of Biblical Interpretation.

We have seen that the Hebrew word *olam* or *Age* is derived from a root signifying that which is hidden, wrapped up, or covered over: in relation to the Scriptures, therefore, it answers to the envelopment or covering of Divine Truth. We have seen, moreover, that the Greek word αἰῶν denotes a moral state of things. Historically, in the case of the Jews, it designated a state of religious consciousness on the part of the Church, the real nature of which was concealed from the Church itself. Accordingly, Dr. Owen observes that*—"*Olam* signifies to hide, or to be hid, kept secret, close, undiscovered," . . . hence that it signifies "the ages of the world in their succession and duration, which are things secret and hidden: what is past is forgotten, what is to come is unknown, and what is present is passing away without much observation."

The transition of the αἰῶν is the same in prophetic language with the transition of "the heavens and earth:" thus "to shake the heavens and the earth" is to shake the dispensation—the Church in its heavenly and earthly, or inward and outward

* *Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews;* chap. i., ver. 2, p. 85.

relations, referring,* in the Epistle to the Hebrews, to the last days of the present Economy.—So again :† "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth," *i. e.*, "will institute a new dispensation of religion, different from that which God had given to the Jews and subversive of it; for it follows the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind."‡ As it is God who is the Ruler of the ages, and disposes them into their order; so He§ is called "the King of the Ages," "the Maker of the Ages, "the Father of the Age to come;" and this too in His character as THE WORD, which created all things. Hence the relation between The Word, and the Age or Dispensation. Now the written Word is the testimony concerning the Living Word.

"If you are willing to believe it," says the

* *Heb.* xii., ver. 26.

† *Isaiah*, chap. lxv., ver. 17. See *Family Bible.*

‡ Upon the same principle of interpretation Cornelius à Lapide observes in his Comments on *Proverbs* viii. 22, etc., referring to the operations of Divine Wisdom; that they imitate the Divine Wisdom who institute new Churches, Sacred Orders, Religious observances, Congregations, etc., such as did the Apostles, and the saints who followed after them; for these may say—The Lord hath made me the founder of a new nation and a new Church.—"These are the builders of a new Order, of a new Church as it were, of a new and holy world. These are the heralds, teachers, and founders of a true wisdom."

§ 1 *Tim.*, chap. i., ver. 17; *Heb.*, chap. i., ver. 2; *Isaiah*, chap. ix., ver. 6.

Arcana,* "the Lord is the Word itself; since the Lord is Divine Truth; and Divine Truth is the Lord in heaven, because from the Lord."

"The Word, in the inmost sense, treats solely of the Lord; describing all the states of the glorification of his humanity, that is, of its union with the essential Divinity; and likewise all the states of the subjugation of the Hells, and the reduction to order of all things in the Hells as well as in the Heavens. Thus, in the inmost sense, is described the Lord's whole life upon earth; and thereby the Lord is continually present with the angels. Therefore the Lord alone is in the inmost part of the Word; and the divinity and sanctity of the Word are thence derived."

This is the inmost and primary sense of the Word. In its secondary sense it treats of regeneration or the new creation by the truths of the Word; of the decline of the Church, its vastation, its rejection of Divine Truth, its resuscitation, by which a new Church succeeds in place of the old, and this throughout the whole series of dispensations.

Hence we see the reason of the statement in *The True Christian Religion*,† that—"The Church exists from the Word; and the quality of the Church

* Art. 2533, 3393, 3712, 2523. *The White Horse mentioned in the Apocalypse*, art. 14.

† Art. 243.

with man is according to his understanding of the Word."

The Lord being the Word itself, the Word therefore is from everlasting; but the mode of communicating to man Divine wisdom from the Word, has varied according to the varied states of the human mind. In the Adamic Church there was essentially the same Word which we have now; for there was the same Lord who is the Word; but the Word was not written. To be wise, at that time, was to be good; and wisdom consisted in the perception of good from the Supreme Good. Hence, wisdom from the Word came to that Church through the medium of the will: but good and evil were then the same essentially to them as they now are to us; the difference is, that the perception of good descended into their minds from within, or as it were *à priori*, from the Living Word through the medium of angels.

In the second Age or the Noachian Church there was the same Living Word, the same Divine Wisdom; but mankind were taught the Word not from within, but from without; not by proceeding from the will to the understanding, but from the understanding to the will; and perceptions of the good and true derived through angels from the Word, being no longer possible, the wisdom of the former age was committed to writing, and this writing was to them their Word. A portion of that Word re-

mains to this day, and constitutes part of our own Word. The historical book of *The Wars of Jehovah** has been lost; but the subject of it has been preserved in the Word which we now have, wherever it treats of the subjugation of the Hells by Jehovah as the Word made flesh. The prophetical book of *Enunciations* has been lost; yet a portion has been retained in our present written Word, and is as true to us as it was to the ancients.

The prophetical Book of *Jashar* also has been lost; but, like *the Wars of Jehovah* and the *Enunciations,* it constituted part of a written Word. It was as true in the Adamic Church as it is now, that unless a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God; and the truths relating to regeneration were as necessary to man at that time as they are now: it was as true then as it is now, that it is by the Word or Divine Truth that man is begotten anew; whether that Word be communicated to man by a living voice, or through the medium of writing. Hence it is, that the early chapters of *Genesis,* describing the process of the regenerate life, are as true to the Christian Church as they were to the Adamic; and the decline and decay of that life are owing to the same causes in the Christian Church as in the Adamic. The same Truths relating to the spiritual

* *Apocalypse Explained*, art. 734. *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 2897, 3432. See Donaldson's fragments of the Book of *Jashar*.

life apply to the human mind under the Noachian dispensation as under the Christian: the same also under the Jewish; so that while their outward form of embodiment has changed, the spiritual sense—the soul within the body—has not changed; for the truths are universal, eternal, immutable—the words of THE WORD; the λόγοι of the Λόγος, of which it is said—"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Upon this principle it is an error to say, that there was once a time when the truths of our present Word were non-existent. Even supposing Enoch to have been, as some conjecture, the inventor of writing, the Word existed before Enoch wrote. Enoch only reduced to writing those truths relating to the inner life, and derived from the Living Word, which had been orally taught, nay, which may have partly existed in another form of writing before his time. In this view of the subject, as derived from the *Arcana*,* you will see that there is no room for the statement made by the Bishop of Natal† with regard to the non-existence of the Bible, viz., that "the Light of God's love did not shine less truly on pious minds when Enoch walked with God of old, though then there was no Bible in existence, than it

* Art. 519, 736, 2896. See our Appendix.

† Dr. Colenso on *The Pentateuch;* Introductory Remarks, chap. i.

does now." We say that there was then a Word of God which had been at least orally taught; and that Enoch, as one who walked with God, was instructed by God to commit that Word to writing. It is, then, a mistake to affirm, that "as men once beheld the light of God's love without a Bible, so we may continue to walk in that light *without* a written Word;" and "cease to build up our faith upon a Book, though it be the Bible itself." When men had not the written Word, they received the truths of that Word from angelic intercourse. True it is, that the mode of apprehending Divine Truth in the Silver Age was ultimately, to a great extent, through the medium of the inner sense of sacrificial institutions; but, as observed by a modern author,* we read of no new sacrificial institutions committed to the Father of the Faithful. "The old sacrificial habits familiar to Abel and Noah, were manifestly brought with him into his adopted land, and served, under divine direction, for carrying out the designs of God during the lives of the first three patriarchs." Indeed Ewald himself seems to take the same view of the subject. The Mosaical institutions were not novelties suddenly introduced, but for the most part revivals of things pertaining to the previous church.

Thus the same sacrificial institutions, statutes, judgments, and ordinances, were for the most part

* Freeman's *Principles of Divine Service*, vol. ii., part ii., p. 96.

continued from the Noachian Church through Abraham to Moses; as it is written—"Even the covenant which he made with Abraham, and the oath that he sware unto Isaac; and appointed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting testament or covenant." Hence it is observed by the same author, that* "the dispensation committed to Moses was, in the strictest sense, the old Abrahamic or patriarchal one; but had to be expanded, to cover the enlarged area, and to meet the altered moral character of the nation."

The altered moral character of the Jewish nation consisted in this, that they had lost the spiritual intelligence which pertained to the previous Churches; that, consequently, they did not understand their own ritualistic services, or the various instructions with which they were accompanied. Their minds had fallen from an intelligent into a merely external or sensuous apprehension of what was internally or essentially celestial and divine, and consequently as such was essentially the Word. It was this mode of interpreting the Word which was the criterion of the quality of the Jewish mind, hence also of the Jewish Church and age. Who then will deny, that the moral state of things in the Jewish Church which constituted the αἰῶν, was entirely dependent upon the interpretation of the Word; or, *vice versâ*,

* Freeman's *Principles of Divine Service*, vol. ii., part. ii., p. 151.

that the interpretation of the Word was the criterion of the character of the age and of the moral state of the mind?

If this was the case with all the Churches down to the Christian, shall the Christian Church be excepted? If our Lord came to fulfil the written Word, and thus to identify in His own Person the written Word with the living Word, surely to be united with Him is to be united with the written Word in Him; and to be united with Him, and yet not to the written Word, is to deny that He had fulfilled the Scriptures. We say then, that the relation of the Christian Church to the written Word is as indissoluble as the relation of the Jewish Church to the written Word; nay, it is even more so. For the relation of the Jewish Church to the written Word, was to the literal sense of the Word: the relation of the Christian Church is not only to the literal, but to the spiritual sense of the Word. Destroy the literal sense of the Word, and what would have become of the Jewish Church? Destroy the literal and spiritual senses of the Word, and what becomes of the Christian Church; what of the Christian Dispensation? To say that the Scriptures might be destroyed or made of none effect, and yet that the Christian Church might survive, is the same thing as to say, that the Law and the Prophets might have been destroyed, and yet that the Jewish Church might have survived: that, in fact, the

Church might exist without the Scriptures, but not the Scriptures without the Church. The reason of such a statement is, that the written Word is first dissociated from its fulfilment in the Person of our Lord; and, in so far as this is effected, it is justly no longer called the Word. Accordingly, reverence for it as being fulfilled in our Lord, is regarded as a superstition; the Scriptures are studied not as a subject of fulfilment in the Person of our Lord, but as a common history subject to all the laws of criticism; and to suppose that the Church derives its existence from mere pen, ink, and paper, or from a Book the meaning of which, dissociated from its fulfilment in the Person of our Lord, is worse than doubtful; is regarded as the result of mere superstition or ignorance, or as little less than a heresy.

In this case, however, there is an obvious subversion of those laws of Divine Providence by which the order of Ages and Churches has been controlled. Churches have risen and have fallen; but the Word of God remains the same. It was the Jewish interpretation of the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets which was the criterion of the religious consciousness of that Age; nay, which even constituted the Jewish Age or Dispensation. When that mode of interpretation ceased, that age of thought also ceased, the Dispensation ceased, the Church itself ceased. The Age or Dispensation, and the Church, were thus inseparably united, we might say identi-

fied, with the mode of Biblical interpretation. Every Age, Dispensation, or Church, has had its own mode of interpretation, because its own mode of apprehending Divine Truth; hence also its own proper phase of religious consciousness.

This being the case, we propose to enquire into the relation between the written Word and the Church in the *present* day; and to ascertain whether, in the *present* state of Biblical interpretation, there be any indications of the transition of the existing Church and Dispensation, and the introduction of another.

What, then, was the primeval principle of interpretation handed down from the Adamic to the Noachian Church, and thence to the Jewish? It is thus stated by a modern writer:*—"When God created this lower world, He created it according to the pattern of the world above, in order that this world might be the image of the world above; and his reason for so doing was, that the one world might be connected with the other." It was upon the same principle that the ritualistic services of the ancient Churches were interpreted at the beginning. As the religious consciousness became more and more external, so did the method of interpretation; the consequence was, as among the Jews, mere sensuous interpretations of the natural world and of

* Lyall's *Propædia Prophetica*, p. 264.

ritualistic services; the original principle of interpretation being gradually lost sight of by some, misunderstood by others, and perverted at last by superstition into cabbalistic and Gnostic traditions.

When, however, the transition took place from the Jewish to the Christian dispensation, there was a transition from the Jewish to the Christian method of interpretation—to that which prevailed in the Noachian dispensation, and from which the Hebrews had declined. This method of interpretation, therefore, was nothing new; it was only the ancient method resuscitated, according to which the Book of Nature and the Book of Revelation were both written, as it were, upon one and the same principle—the natural enveloping the spiritual; the spiritual being developed only by the process of removing the natural. It was upon this principle that Jerome and Gregory the Great* observed, that "The Bible, in its literal sense, is a book rolled up; and that it is unrolled when its spiritual sense is laid open,"—that "The† ark of the testimony being covered up, designates the mysteries which are latent under the covering;"—also that Augustine observed,‡ "God covers the heavens with clouds, when He covers the Holy Scriptures with a covering of figures and of mysteries." . . . "And He covers

* See both writers on *Ezekiel*, chap. ii.

† Lauretus, art. *Operire*, *Expandere*.

‡ On *Psalms* cxlvi., lxxix.

the mountains with the shadow of the vine, when, in the words used by prophets and apostles, are covered up the mysteries of the old Law." The patristical writings are replete with expressions of a similar kind; all founded upon the principle, that the natural is the covering of the spiritual, the spiritual the uncovering of the natural; thus, that the Christian dispensation was a development of that truth of which the Jewish dispensation was an envelopment; and, had there been no causes to interrupt or arrest the development, it would have gone on to the fulfilment of the prophecy in *Isaiah** — "He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations;" *i.e.*, He will remove all obscurity respecting the true meaning of His Word, and will open the understandings of His people to perceive its internal truths and the genuine doctrines of the Church.

This principle of interpretation, which was revived at the beginning in the Christian Church, has, however, in process of time, met with the same fate which it experienced in the Noachian: instead of being developed, its progress has been arrested, itself perverted, till finally it has been denied, and then denounced; the interpretation equally with the statute, judgment, or precept interpreted, being

* *Isaiah*, chap. xxv. 7.

now regarded as alike belonging to bygone times. If the revival of that principle marked the introduction of a new Dispensation, its final rejection marks the end of the Dispensation. On the ground of analogy, then, we affirm, that the final rejection of this principle of interpretation in the present day signalizes the end of the Age, or of the heavens and earth of the Dispensation.

To illustrate the case:

It is written* that Jehovah said to Moses: "Now these are the judgments which thou shalt set before them. If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve, and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself; if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him."

In the early Christian Church this law, relating to civil life, was regarded as enveloping or covering some Divine mystery relating to the spiritual life. Hence on the words—"I have done judgment and justice: leave me not to my oppressors"—"Deal with thy servant according to thy mercy, and teach me thy statutes"—"I am thy servant, give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies,"—Hilary makes the following observations:†—

"But what is it the servant of God asks, when

* Exod. xxi. 1, etc.

† Psalm 118. Litera *Ayin.*, Ben. Ed., p. 339.

he prays that God would deal with him according to his mercy? It is this; that God would teach him his judgments. For the servant of God knows that in the judgments which Moses was commanded to institute, there is contained something, I know not what, great and incomprehensible to the human understanding. He wishes to know who is the Hebrew servant that is bought, and is to serve only for six years. He reads these things indeed; but what he reads is not forthwith understood. He wishes to know what the servitude is; what the liberty on the seventh year; what the boring of the ear with an awl if he has no wish to be free; what is meant by the wife of the Hebrew; what by the Hebrew going out without his wife; what means the second judgment which follows; what the third; what the others which succeed, as prefiguring further mysteries still to come. To attain to this knowledge belongs not to the human understanding: there is need of a heavenly teacher: and to become worthy to be taught, it is necessary that we should do things worthy of our faith."

Now it is certain that this mode of viewing the subject which prevailed in the early days of Christianity, has entirely passed away. No Jew could interpret this law more literally than do modern commentators; and yet the law was given to Moses by Jehovah himself as truly as the Ten Commandments: it is solemnly repeated in *Deuteronomy*, and

the non-observance of it was the occasion of the destruction of the Temple and the captivity to Babylon. It is of no use to allege that the spiritual interpretation given by Gregory the Great is vague and fanciful; or that the popular notions concerning this passage, as referring to the bondage of sin and the liberty of the people of God, are unworthy of the name of interpretation. The* fact still remains, that although the Jews were ignorant of the spiritual sense of Scripture, yet the supposition of a spiritual meaning being couched under the literal sense of Scripture was a received notion among the Jews; and that "*it was scarcely possible for them to have regarded it as the inspired Word of God,* without, at the same time, attributing to it a meaning beyond what was conveyed by the literal interpretation."

This meaning, however, their sensuous apprehensions could not perceive; the consequence was its existence was only a tradition subserving the purposes of ignorance and superstition. The difference, however, between the Jew and the modern Christian is this, that the cabbalistic Jew believed, but did not understand; the modern Christian neither believes nor understands; for what is the literal interpretation given to the words—"If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself?"

* Lyall's *Propædia Prophetica*, p. 274.

The answer of the modern interpreter is—"He shall have the same coat in going out as he had when he came in, *i.e.*, if he came in with a new one, he shall go out with a new one; which was perfectly just, as the former coat must have been worn out in his master's service, and not in his own."

The translation in the *Vulgate** is to the same effect. Moses was gone up into the mountain; he had entered the cloud: the camp of the Israelites began to doubt of his safety: but in the meanwhile this is the colloquy, so to speak, between him and the angels—nay, even between him and Jehovah. Is there need of any heavenly teacher to enlighten the servants of God with knowledge of this kind?

Now the whole of this chapter, for a knowledge of whose spiritual sense Hilary prays for a heavenly teacher, is explained in the *Arcana*† as relating to those "who hurt or destroy the truth of faith or the good of charity appertaining either to themselves or to others; what is the punishment and what the restitution?" Accordingly, the internal sense is explained as treating in a *connected series* "of the denial, blasphemy, and profanation of Truth and Good which are from the Lord. In the external sense no such series appears; for in this latter sense the subject treated of is various, as relating to those

* See Adam Clarke's *Commentary* on this passage.

† Art. 8970, 9022.

who smite a man that he dies, who slay a companion by deceit, who smite father and mother, who steal a man and sell him, who curse father and mother. In all these particulars such is the Word, that in the internal sense things follow in *order* as in a *catena;* although in the external sense or the sense of the letter they are scattered, and in many cases divided."

It is the apparent incoherence not only of this, but of other parts of the Pentateuch, that has given rise to the formidable objections raised by critics with regard to its authenticity—objections which nevertheless disappear when the narrative is interpreted according to the spiritual sense. "It is wonderful," says the *Arcana,** "that in such a part of the globe as Europe, so learned above all other parts where the Word is, in whose several particulars there is an internal sense, yet that of this sense there is no knowledge at all. Nevertheless, this knowledge existed among the ancients in Chaldæa, Assyria, Egypt, Arabia, and thence also in Greece; in whose books, emblems, and hieroglyphics such things are still to be met with. The reason why such knowledge has perished, is, because there is *no faith that what is spiritual is anything.*"

This is precisely the point: the spiritual has vanished, and left only the natural; there is an

* Art. 9011.

external without any internal—the spiritual is not any thing. In process of time this state of things arrives at its consummation, and this consummation is that also of the Church and Dispensation. In pursuing this course, the Divine Providence is only carrying out that same law of transition which had existed from the beginning. The Word is the light; the Church is the dial; the interpretation is the shadow on the dial, marking the hour or the state of the religious consciousness. When all is shadow, the hour is not seen because there is no light; and there is no light because the sun is darkened.

Let us illustrate the case by what took place in the last days of the Jewish Dispensation, with regard to the TEMPLE.

The services of the Temple were the literal text of the Word of God acted out in the external life. These services, however, were then as much deprived of all spiritual life as the literal text of the Bible itself. The Church, the Temple, the Scriptures were all, at that time, an external without an internal, a body without a soul. The building of the Tabernacle was the sign of the commencement of that Age; its destruction, as depicted in that of the Temple, was the sign of the end of that Age. The Age or Dispensation, the interpretation of the Word of God, and the Church, were all inseparably connected with each other: the one could not subsist without the other, and when the one came to an

end so did the other. The destruction of the Temple, therefore, was the signal of the consummation of the age. Well then, what the material Temple was to the Jewish Dispensation, the Word or the Scriptures are to the Christian Dispensation. Take away the spiritual sense, and the Word is an external without an internal, a body without a soul. Separated from the internal the external cannot stand, whether it be the Scriptures or the Church. Fight as we may for the literal sense, we shall be only, in this case, like the Jews fighting for their Temple; for the external without the internal, for a body without a soul; and the result will be the same in both cases, that not one stone will be left upon another. If the Temple come to an end, the Dispensation comes to an end; and if the Dispensation come to an end, what becomes of the Church?

It* has been said, that the destruction of the Temple was to the Jewish dispensation what the end of the world is to the Christian; but we have seen, that by *the end of the world* is meant only the consummation of the age; and besides, as already observed, there is a Temple proper to the Christian dispensation, as there was a Temple proper to the Jewish; the difference between the two is, that the one is spiritual, the other material: as such, the

* *History of the Rise and Early Progress of Christianity.* By S. Hinds, Vice-Principal of St. Alban's Hall. Vol. i., p. 120.

destruction of the spiritual Temple can be seen only by the spiritual eye. Hence to many, when it takes place, it may be altogether invisible; and thus the Dispensation or the Age may have come to an end, without the Church being aware.

What then is the spiritual Temple proper to Christianity as a spiritual dispensation?

It is generally known and admitted that the Temple represents, 1. The Lord's Divine body; 2. Heaven; 3. The Church: in these respects there is no difference between the significations commonly given, and those which are given by Swedenborg; but there is another signification, given both by ancient writers and by Swedenborg, which is not so generally attended to; we mean that according to which the *Temple* represents the *Scriptures.* This is the more important, because we are told* that in the prophecy of our Lord, the events which were to take place at the end of the Jewish dispensation, were hieroglyphical of those which were to take place at the end of the Christian dispensation; consequently that the destruction of the Jewish Temple was hieroglyphical of the destruction of the Christian Temple.

This correspondence between the endings of the two dispensations results from the correspondence

* *History of the Rise and Early Progress of Christianity*, vol. i., pp. 118, 121.

between the two dispensations themselves. Indeed all the dispensations are in close correspondence with each other; upon the very principle of envelopment and development of the same Divine truths common to all, as we have explained. This is the reason why one dispensation can be described in terms applying to another; and the end of one be descriptive of the end of the other. Accordingly, some writers maintain that the key to the Apocalypse is the closing of the Jewish dispensation; but even if this were the case, it would correspondingly apply to the closing of the Christian dispensation. "All the prophecies," says Bishop Warburton, "concerning the introduction of the Gospel, are delivered in terms appropriate to the Law." Hence all the prophecies concerning the end of the Jewish dispensation are equally prophecies concerning the end of the Christian. This principle is thus illustrated in the *Apocalypse Explained.* It is written:*—

"'All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fall down as the leaf falleth from the vine, and as a fig falleth from the fig-tree.'

"These things were said concerning the day of the Last Judgment which was about to come, and which also came; for the Last Judgment, predicted by the prophets of the Old Testament, was accom-

* *Isaiah* xxxiv. 4. *Apocalypse Explained*, art. 403.

plished by the Lord when He was in the world. And inasmuch as similar things then took place as in the Last Judgment predicted in the Apocalypse, and is at this day accomplished by the Lord; therefore things nearly similar are said concerning it."

Now, inasmuch as the building of the Tabernacle marked the commencement of the dispensation, and its destruction, as implied in that of the Temple, marked its termination; it is important that we should fully understand what is the relation of the Tabernacle or Temple to the Scriptures as the Word of God.

"The* Tabernacle of the testimony," says Jerome, "was the Law containing the images of those mysteries which came afterwards."

"The Tabernacle which God will shew (Exod. xxv. 9)," says Gregory the Great, "may signify the mysteries of the New Testament."

Origen, in his Commentary on Matt. xxiv., makes the following remarks :—

"There was a Temple of God built up by putting together significant words, namely, all the Scripture of the Old Testament, as constructed according to the historical sense. Moses, or the prophets, who raised this structure by the collocation of letters and the orderly arrangement of words, raised up a building to be admired of all for the beauty of its

* Lauretus, art. *Tabernaculum.*

stones, namely, its choice expressions endowed with meanings worthy of all praise. This structure the disciples, as receiving all the Scriptures, shew to Jesus; to whom Christ replies by saying, that this building, which was only as the outward body and the first in order, was to be destroyed by the Word; in order that the more divine and spiritual *(mysterialius)* temple of another Scripture might be built up. Now that *the Temple is the Scripture*, there is one before us who has already explained. For he who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, who sitteth in the Temple of God and is Antichrist, is that false teaching maintained to be in the Scriptures which puts on the appearance of truth, and presents to those who are unwilling to be otherwise satisfied, impious dogmas from out of the Scriptures. This is the Antichrist who opposeth himself, who sitteth upon the seat, nay, the very structure, of the Scriptures; shewing himself to be, as it were, God. And, indeed, at all times we may see the teachings of heresies as so many Antichrists sitting in the Temple of the Scriptures, and of their own selfhood wishing to gratify their hearers; as if each one by himself were God the Word in the Scriptures."

How the Temple of the Scriptures is destroyed, is further explained at large by Origen, in his Commentary on this chapter of *Matthew;* of which the following is a summary:—

Christ is the truth, the Word of God: every heresy calls itself the truth, the Word of God; but being opposed to the truth, it is only a form of Antichrist. In this sense there will be many Antichrists, and they will deceive many; as professing to be the truth, while yet they are not the truth. If those who are without the Church were the only persons seduced, it would be an easy matter to beware of seduction. But now the very persons who profess to be of the Church *(ecclesiasticos)* are deceived, and seduced upon some leading points; as is evidenced by the dissensions among them; for even persons within the Church are seduced. Of these, however, some are more and some are less so. These dissensions with regard to the truth are the battles and seditions predicted by our Lord, in which one heresy or system of false philosophy in the Church rises up against another; but they who are in the truth are not to be alarmed. In the midst of the many scandals which will hence arise, there will be but few who will be intent upon searching out the truth for themselves. The abomination of desolation standing in the Holy place, is some impious dogma which will be taught as derived from the Holy Scriptures; but the lie will not overtake those who flee to the sublime mountains of spiritual truth. Whosoever shall be in such a Judæa as is here described, let him flee to the mountains; that is, whosoever has dwelt in the

oldness of the letter, let him flee to the mountains of new spiritual truths *(spiritalium novitatum)*. Sad, however, will be the trials of minds impregnated with the truth which they had just begun to learn; for the light of truth will then be darkened, and error will be regarded as the Sun of righteousness; but Christ shall then come in clouds, that is, in the clouds of prophecy, the Scriptures of the prophets and apostles.

Such is the sum of Origen's interpretation of our Lord's prophecy concerning the Second Advent; in which the events recorded as occurring at the consummation of the Jewish age, are regarded as hieroglyphical of those which were to occur at the end of the Christian age. Accordingly, the interpretation of Origen is substantially the same with that of Swedenborg. The impious dogma to which Origen refers is the one opposed to that which had occupied the Holy Place, and sanctified the Temple —or the testimony concerning the Unity of God, hence concerning the Divine Love as the centre and source of all unity. This was the first and the great commandment of God; which was to be superseded or displaced by some other first and great commandment of men. For, "The* sanctity itself of the whole Tabernacle was derived from the Testimony; that is, from the two tables of stone on which the

* *Apocalypse Explained*, art. 700.

Law was inscribed; by reason that the Law signified the Lord as to Divine truth and thence as to the Word; for this is Divine truth." The greatest desecration, therefore, which could happen to the spiritual Temple, would be the desecration of that which was the most holy in it; namely, the Testimony, the first and greatest commandment of which was consequently the holiest.

Accordingly, we read in the *Apocalypse Explained:**

"Inasmuch as by the *Temple*, in the supreme sense, is signified the Lord† as to His Divine Humanity, thus also as to Divine Truth; it hence also signifies the *Divine Truth proceeding from the Lord*,

* Art. 630, 220.

† "There is a great—too great—probability that the next question will concern the Godhead of Christ. I earnestly hope that years may elapse before that question is brought to a judicial issue. If we are only patient, a legal adjudication upon it may never be needed. Should it, however, be forced to a solution any time within the next decade, I cannot imagine how the verdict—whatever it be—can be otherwise than most disastrous. The general public, which at present unconsciously believes in two, if not three Gods, is as yet utterly unfit to face the question."—*Essays on Church Policy.* Edited by the Rev. W. L. Clay, M.A., Incumbent of Rainhill, Lancashire; 1868: p. 119.

See also my *Letter to the Archbishop of Dublin;* and the state of theology in the Church upon this subject as explained in *The Spiritual Exposition of the Apocalypse*, vol. iii., *Death of the First Witness*, p. 40.

consequently *the Word;* for this is the Divine Truth in the Church. That, in the supreme sense, the Divine Humanity of the Lord is signified by the Temple, appears from the words of the Lord where He says, 'Destroy *(solvite)* this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up; this He spake of the Temple of His body' (John ii. 18). That by *Temple* is signified (in a subordinate sense) the Church (as to Divine Truth), appears from these words of the Lord: that there should not be left of the Temple one stone upon another which should not be thrown down. By which words is understood, that all Divine Truth, consequently everything of the Church, would perish; for the end of the Church is there treated of, which is called the consummation of the age."

This is in accordance with what Origen says in another place:—"The* Temple of the glory of God is all Scripture divinely inspired; and the gold laid up in the Temple, is the sense which is laid up in Scripture."

Not only, however, Origen, but other ancient writers have regarded the *Temple* as representing the Word of God.

"We† are led," says Gregory the Great, "as through the door into the courts of the Eternal

* Commentary on *Matthew* xxiii. 16.

† *In primum Regum*, lib. iii., chap. iii., p. 135; tom. iii.

Temple, when, through the letter of the Holy Word, we are elevated to its allegorical and spiritual meaning. Within the Temple also is beheld the King; because in the spiritual meaning of Holy Scripture is found the promised Redeemer of the human race."

As the Temple is so conspicuous a representative in the prophecy concerning the end of the dispensation, so is it equally conspicuous in the prophecy concerning a new dispensation; for, as in the prophecy of our Lord it is described as fallen, so in the Apocalypse it is described as restored and reopened. "Rise and measure the Temple of God," says the Angel to John; after which we read that the Temple of God was opened in heaven; on which subject Aquinas observes :*—

"The Temple of God was then opened in heaven, when the secrets of the Divine mysteries which were shut up in Scripture, were made manifest by Christ assuming the flesh; for then it was that He began to open the Temple, namely, the mysteries of Scripture."

"The† temple in heaven," says Richard of St. Victor, "is the Divine mystery contained in the Sacred Oracles of God."

"By the Temple," says Berengaud, "we may

* *In Apocalypsin*, cap. xi., ver. 19.

† See Richard, Berengaud, Williams *in loc.*

understand the Old Testament: by the ark, the mysteries concerning Christ contained in the Old Testament. For on the coming of Christ in the flesh the Old Testament was laid open, and the spiritual meaning which lay concealed within it was revealed to the faithful."

Similar is the interpretation of the *Glossa Ordinaria* :—"The Temple of God was opened in heaven, *i. e.*, the Holy Spirit was given, by which the Divine mysteries of the Church, figured by the second tabernacle, were revealed to the faithful." The mysteries revealed are said to be those which relate to Redemption ; which of course involves the mystery of the Incarnation, or of the union of our Lord's Humanity with His Divinity.

So Isaac Williams : — "The opening of the Temple of God must at all events signify, that the kingdom and mystery of Christ are now in some sense fully revealed. The ark of the Testament—the Old Testament laid up therein, is made manifest and understood. The Lamb hath been found worthy to open the mystery."

So also Pearson, Christian Advocate of Cambridge :—"The* interior part of the Temple containing the ark of the covenant, which under the Law was accessible only to the High Priest, is now

* *Prophetical Character and Inspiration of the Apocalypse*, p. 175.

exhibited to public view; emblematical of that perfect revelation of the wonders and mysteries of the great scheme of Redemption which will accompany this final accomplishment of the Dispensations of God."

While, however, there is this agreement with regard to the meaning of the Temple and the opening of its mysteries, some refer the time of the opening to the first advent; others to the time of Antichrist; others to both.* It is certain that a large body of commentators, ancient and modern, refer the opening of the Temple, partly or wholly, to the time of Antichrist; and in this case the Antichristian age is distinguished by two conspi-

* "During the power of Antichrist the Temple of God seemed to be shut up, and was so to a great degree; but now it was opened again. At this opening of it, observe what was seen there—'the ark of God's testament.' This was in the Holy of Holies. In this ark the tables of the law were kept. As before Josiah's time the law of God had been lost, but was then found; so in the reign of Antichrist God's law was laid aside and made void by their traditions and decrees; the Scriptures were locked up from the people, and they must not look into these divine oracles: now they are opened, now they are brought to the view of all."—*Matthew Henry's Bible, Apocalypse*, chap. xi. 19.

With respect to the statement that the Scriptures were locked up from the people, the reader is referred, in reply, to a little tract entitled *An Open Bible* (Palmer): also to an article upon the same subject in an American magazine, called *The Catholic World*, for August, 1868.

cuous signs; the one, a dissolution of the Temple or of the Scriptures; the other, a restoration of the Temple or of the Scriptures, and the opening of the spiritual sense.

Does the present age exhibit either of these signs? We proceed to enquire. And first with regard to the Church.

Is it possible, we ask, to conceive the Temple to be without any Holy of Holies, without any Sanctuary, without any Courts? If not, and if the *Temple* be in any true sense a representative of the Scriptures—whether we say that the Scriptures are the Word of God, or that the Word of God is contained in the *Scriptures;* it is certain that the Holy of Holies, the Sanctuary, and the Courts must have their part in the representation. Hence, on the words, "The court which is without the Temple, leave out and measure it not," it is observed in the *Apocalypse Explained:**—

"The case is the same with respect to *The Word* and worship as it is with respect to heaven and the Church. For in the Word there are three distinct senses; as there are three heavens. The inmost sense, which is called the celestial sense, is for the inmost or third heaven; the middle sense, which is called the spiritual sense, is for the middle or second heaven; and the ultimate sense, which is

* Art. 630.

called the celestial-natural or spiritual-natural, is for the ultimate or first heaven. These three senses, *besides the natural which is for the world*, are in the Word and every particular thereof. And whereas the three heavens have the Word, and each heaven is in its own sense of the Word, and from this each heaven exists, and also the worship proper to each; it therefore follows, that what signifies heaven signifies also the Word and worship. From this circumstance then it is, that the *Court* signifies the external of the Word, and thence the external of the Word and worship."

Either we must give up the interpretation that the Temple represents the Scriptures, or we must adopt this threefold inner meaning of the Scriptures as represented by the Temple.

Assuming, then, that the Temple is a legitimate representative of the Word of God; it follows, that the *literal sense* of that Word, as contained in the Scriptures and received by the Church in the world, corresponds to the *Outer Court*. This outer court, we read, is given up to the Gentiles; in other words, the literal sense of Scripture is given up to those who do not enter into the Temple, and who would desecrate if they did. "This comes to pass," says *The Apocalypse Explained*,* "in the end of the Church; when men are so far worldly, natural, and

* Art. 631.

corporeal, that interior truths, which are called spiritual truths, cannot be at all seen by them; whence it follows, that they then *entirely pervert the Word as to the external or literal sense thereof.* Such a perversion of the literal sense of the Word took place also with the Jews, at the end of the Church that was with them."

The Jews had made the Word of God of none effect, and this was a sign of the end of the dispensation. We propose to shew, how the Word of God is made of none effect in the present day, as a sign of the end of the dispensation.

According to *The True Christian Religion,** the Church exists from the Word of God; according to a large portion of Christendom, the Word of God exists from the Church. According to *The True Christian Religion*, the quality of the Church with man is dependent upon his understanding of the Word; according to a large portion of Christendom, the quality of the Word is dependent upon the understanding of the Church. The one declares that the Church exists from the Word, because the Word is Divine Truth; the other, that the Word exists from the Church, because the Church is of prior Divine origin.

If now the *Outer Court* corresponds to the outer or literal sense of the Word; it also corresponds to

* Art. 243.

the outer Church, or the Church in this world; in other words, to the Church in this world as to its interpretation of the Word. In ascertaining the state of the Church, however, it is not the Church that measures the "*reed;*" but the "*reed*" that measures the Church. Now, according to Ambrose Ansbert and Haymo, the "reed like unto a rod" is the Divine Scripture, or the preaching of the Divine Word. Bullenger also observes that the "*reed*" is the Word of God, and that after John is taught how great is the power of the Word of God (by which, says he, "I understand whatsoever God hath revealed, and through the Church has proposed to us to be believed, whether it be written or unwritten), the office is enjoined of distinguishing, determining, and discerning the Church; which, as St. Paul teaches, is the true Temple of God." A similar interpretation is given by Aquinas, Berengaud, and Protestant Commentators, of the "*golden reed*" mentioned in *Apoc.* xxi.; so that we have here the Church, as the interpreter of Scripture, testifying that the Scripture is to be the rule of the Church, and not the Church to be the rule of Scripture. The Church is that which is measured, not that which measures. This at least is the case with the Church which is here called the Temple of God; consequently, if the rule be perverted, the perversion must take place not in the Temple of God, but in the outer court of the Temple, or that part of

the Temple which constitutes the Church upon earth.

To measure is, in the natural sense, to ascertain the quantity: in the spiritual sense, it is to ascertain the quality; and as a *rod* signifies *power*, so there was given to John, or to those whom John represented, the power or faculty of judging, derived from the Scriptures, concerning the quality of the true Church as to Divine Truth; for it is in relation to Divine Truth that the true Church is represented by the Temple, and the Antichristian Church by the Outer Court.

According to certain received theories, however, such a mode of proceeding is an inversion of Divine Order. For we are told, that the Church was in being before the Old or New Testament was written; that the Bible was given through the Church, since the Holy Spirit inspired the Church to indite it; that the same Spirit has promised to remain with the Church as an abiding inspiration; that the Church, in the exercise of this inspiration, selected the books which compose the canon of Revelation: that she alone is the witness of the authenticity and divine inspiration of these books; that she is the infallible interpreter of the sense of Scripture; that without the Church we should neither have had a Bible, nor have known what it teaches: that the Church, therefore, is the first authority to us, and that without her testimony we could not believe the Bible.

Certainly, if the office of the Church be to interpret Scripture, the quality of the Church, as interpreter, must be derived from the quality of her interpretations. If we say, moreover, that the Church is the judge of what is the Divine Law and what is not, in this respect the Judge has the precedence; and so long as the existence or the meaning of the Law is doubtful, the office of the Judge is prior to that of the Law. But when once the existence and meaning of the Law are determined, the relation of the Judge to the Law is changed; and the Judge becomes subordinate to the Law, not the Law to the Judge.

Now we shall see that after the Law has been determined to be Divine, the Judge still claims a pre-eminence over the Law; for the Law which constitutes him a Judge is said to be supreme over the Law which he interprets, the unwritten Law supreme over the written; so that the Church which becomes relatively a law to herself, is supreme, the written Word subordinate: the Church stands not on the foundation of the Scriptures, but on ground distinct and independent; measuring itself by itself, and comparing itself with itself. Thus the Church measures the "*reed*," not the "*reed*" the Church; it is not the written Word of God that is the index of the phase of religious consciousness, but the Church herself instead of the written Word; and we are to judge of the transition of ages, not by

what prophecy says of the Church, but by what the Church says of prophecy.

That this is the case is clearly seen from the following remarks.

1. The Church is said to be the body of Christ, and as such to be a continuation of the Incarnation upon earth: infallible as Christ is infallible, and indefectible as Christ is indefectible. In what sense the Church is indefectible, we shall see in the sequel: at present we observe, that the temple of the Church is thus placed upon an equality with the temple of Christ's body; the Church militant on an equality with the Divine Humanity of the Lord triumphant.

This claim to inspiration on the part of the Church, preceding, and as we shall see, superseding the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures, is founded on the following doctrine of Athanasius:*

"And when Peter said, 'Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ,' it is not of his Divinity that he says He made him Lord and Christ, but of his Humanity, which is the Universal Church; which in Him has dominion and rule after he was crucified, and which is anointed for the kingdom of heaven; that it may reign with him who has emptied Himself for it, and who in putting on the form of a servant, assumed it."

* Book on *The Incarnation*, sec. 21.

The Church being thus the body of Christ; and, as such, a continuation as it were, of the Incarnation; there is said to be a communication of properties between Christ and the Church, such as there is between Christ as man and Christ as God. As it is this doctrine which is the foundation of the teaching that the voice of the Church is the living Word of God, we shall quote the statement of Cornelius à Lapide on *Ephesians* iv. 13.

"Christ is, as it were, the hypostasis, life, and soul of his Church, as I have remarked on 1 *Cor.* xii. And thus all Christians in the Church are, as it were, one, nay, one man civil and political in Christ. And this is the root of that rule of Tychonius, as set forth in the words of Augustine; which teaches us that Sacred Scripture attributes to Christ those things which are of the Church, and to the Church those things which are of Christ. As if there were a communication of properties between Christ and the Church, such as there is between Christ Man and Christ God."

The consequence is, that the Church* is called a "divinely human" or a divine human body, the "visible form of Christ upon earth," his "permanent ever renovated humanity," "his eternal revelation to us;" so that Christ himself is only so far an

* Perrone's *Theological Prelections*, *De Christ. Eccl. Constit.*, vol. ii., chap. 2. See also Moehler's *Symbolism*, chap. v., sec. 36, 37, 38.

authority as the Church is an authority. This authority is conferred by, we are told, the Sacrament of Ordination, which imparts divinity to the priesthood, and hence to the decrees of the Church.

Accordingly, the written Word of God is made to transfer its authority to the Church in the following manner:—

"The Church is another form which the Word has assumed, and under which guise He lives, moves, and has His being in the midst of men. The Church and Christ are convertible terms; the one may be taken for the other, inasmuch as the power and the authority of the Church is the power and authority of Christ."*

Is it not clear that the Word and the Church are here convertible terms; and thus that the voice of the Church and the Word of God are in like manner convertible? In this case the doctrine of infallibility and indefectibility is a necessity; for to say that the Church is not infallible and indefectible, would be to say that Christ is not infallible and indefectible. On the other hand, to admit that the Church is fallible or defectible, would be to admit the same with regard to Christ, and to undermine

* The passages in Scripture on which this doctrine is made to rest are the following:—*Matthew* xvi. 18; *Luke* x. 16; *John* xx. 21; *Matthew* xxviii. 20. See *Sermons on the Reunion of Christendom by Members of the Roman Catholic, Oriental, and Anglican Communions;* 1864: p. 24.

the whole argument with respect to the authority of the Church.

These doctrines enable us to understand the following observations of Bozius:*—

. . . "Now in like manner as words are to us the signs by which we make known the perceptions of our minds to whomsoever we wish; so God by an inmost impulse, as by a kind of voice, stirs up the minds of those who are set in authority, to do that which is agreeable to the divine will. This motion, however, this *divine* voice, (which is wont to be and ought to be preceded by many deliberations,) is given in answer to the inquiries of our rulers; an answer in which they may acquiesce, as being that which is acceptable to God: and although in councils different persons may be of different opinions, yet it is enough if they nearly all, through the consent of the greater part, determine that which is afterwards approved by the Roman Pontiff. For as to the others who are of a different opinion, it is necessary that they should humble their minds, and acknowledge their own infirmity and need; in which case they are under a necessity of giving in their assent to the others; and so are *divinely* moved to make their sentiments accede to those of other Christians; and this motion is a certain *divine* voice."

. . . "It is therefore a most safe and assured posi-

* *De Signis Ecclesiæ*, vol. ii., p. 424.

tion, that *the sanctuary of truth is in the decrees of the* CHURCH; *whose teaching is divine*, as we proceed to shew. For this was no other than the meaning of Isaias, chap. ix., when he said that God would 'sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to confirm it and establish it in justice and judgment from henceforth even for evermore.' Now the throne of David we have explained to be the Church of Christians; for they are born again of the race of Christ the son of David, by reason of the implantation of a new and entirely divine form of mind and body. In this Church God sitteth as in His throne; in order that justice and judgment may thence proceed according to the most perfect equity. And in like manner as the tribunal in which judges give their sentences is said to determine controversies and to make laws, while all the time it is the judge who promulgates from thence his decrees; so likewise it is not the Church that is said to give out the sanctions, by which doubts are removed from the minds of men; but it is to God Himself, who sits in the Church as on His royal and judicial throne, that its laws are deservedly ascribed."

. . . "So on Ezekiel xxxiv. 22, and *seq.*, 'And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David,' etc., etc. These things said God, attesting that Christ Himself, who is God, is the Pastor of the Church and the Ruler who is set in the midst of it. And what means this,

'I the Lord will be their God;' which likewise is often repeated by other prophets, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah? Was He not God to the Hebrews also? In these words then God intended nothing else than that He would be a God unto the Church in all respects; so that *all the things of the* CHURCH *should be most highly and entirely divine.*" . . .

"But since it would be an endless task to recite all the sayings of the prophets to this purpose, let us come to Christ. 'He who heareth you,' says He to the Apostles, 'heareth me; and he who despiseth you, despiseth me.' Which words Cyprian believes to apply not to the Apostles only, but through the Apostles (such is his expression) to all who are in authority, who succeed in place of the Apostles by Ordination. But who will deny that the voice of Christ was divine? Surely it would be most foolish to confine those words of Christ, 'he who heareth me,' only to what is *written;* for none of the words of Christ had as yet been committed to writing; nor is Jesus speaking of words, but of those who hear the words. 'He who heareth you,' said He; but *writings* are not heard but read. Therefore if Jesus had meant to refer to *writings,* it would have been said, 'he who *readeth* your *writings.*' It must stand good therefore, that he heareth Christ and God who hears the *authorities of the* CHURCH, *i. e.,* who hears the Church; and therefore that *the voice of the* CHURCH *is divine.*" . . .

"See you not that the Apostles, and their successors who sustain the person of the Church, are one with Christ and the Father? Christ says of Himself, 'I am the light of the world;' nevertheless He asserted of the Apostles, 'Ye are the light of the world;' and lest you should except to this that it was meant to apply to the light of works, He added, 'Ye are the salt of the earth;' which Augustine interprets as applying solely to teaching. Christ says of Himself, 'I came into the world that I might bear witness to the truth.' The same office He attributes to the Apostles; 'Ye shall be witnesses to me throughout all Judea and Samaria, even to the ends of the earth.' Christ said to God, 'Thou hast sent me.' He said of the Apostles, 'As thou hast sent me into the world, so send I them in the world.' Further; 'The glory which thou hast given me, I have given them.' Lastly; 'That all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee.' 'I in them and thou in me, that they may be all perfect in one.' Who therefore dares deny that the teaching of the *Church* is from heaven? There is the same light to the *Church* which there is to *Christ;* the same testimony to the truth; the same authority to make itself heard; the same power of delegating; the same glory; and lastly, *the same oneness with Christ and with God.* Must not therefore *the definitions of the Church be the definitions of God?*"

We now see the reason for which the DECREES OF THE CHURCH are regarded as DIVINE; for which consequently the decree of the three hundred bishops at Nice was required to be looked upon as the sentence of God Himself; and for which it was said by Cardinal Julian in his harangue to the deputies of the Bohemians in the Council of Basil, "That the decrees of councils are not less to be believed than the Gospel; because it is they that give authority to the Scriptures."

Having now considered the authority of the Church, we proceed, secondly, to the authority of the Scriptures, as dependent upon and derived from that of the Church. And here Bozius, in chap. x., thus continues, p. 433;—

"The Church is of greater authority than the Divine Scripture considered apart from the Church."

"But when heretics endeavour in every possible way to pull to pieces the authority of the Church, as deduced from its reign and conjunction with Christ; then, because they see that they are mightily urged and pressed by this authority, and that they have no place of refuge into which, like slippery serpents, they may make their escape, (so far as they can;) they have *dared* to affirm that *Divine Scripture is of greater authority than the Church;* which how *falsely* and *impudently* asserted, is clearly evident from our foregoing remarks. Nevertheless, in order that they may be convicted,

and have nothing whatever to say, we shall subjoin a few further remarks. But previously you must take note of two things; that, in the first place, we are here treating of the *written* Word of God: and this must be kept in mind. For our adversaries make many affirmations concerning the Word of God, which, as we shall see, have nothing to do with the question concerning the unwritten Word of God, which is inscribed upon the heart of the Church itself; affirmations which (if considered) make most especially against themselves. Secondly, when we ask which of the two has the greater authority, the meaning is, what is the principal reason for which faith is to be placed in the things to be believed; is it because they are *written*, or because the *Church says* that they are to be believed?"

"Now in whom are we more to believe than in Christ? Who, I pray you, can be equal to Him? Is there any one else in whom we are to place greater faith than in God? 'Ye believe in God,' says He in the Gospel of John, 'believe also in me;' and in another place, 'He who heareth my Word, and believeth in Him who hath sent me, hath eternal life.' And we have shewn above, that Christ and God reside and are in the *Church;* and therefore that *the voice and doctrine of the* CHURCH *are divine.*"

"Further, the very Church itself is the Church of Christ, and His fulness; as Paul testifies to the

Ephesians, chap. iii. What therefore can be wanting to that which is the fulness of Christ Himself; which is full of Christ; into which Christ infuses His entire self? That we may fully know of how great moment the foregoing words are, St. Paul, speaking of Christ and God, observes; 'He hath put all things under His feet, and hath given Him to be head over all the Church, which is His body, and the fulness of Him which filleth all in all.' The Church, says He, is the fulness of Christ who filleth all in all, who bringeth all to perfection or is himself brought to perfection, as the Latin interpreter renders it; for in the Greek the words are, *τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ πάντα ἐν πᾶσι πληρουμένου*, that is, the fulness of him who filleth all in all; or who is filled '*secundum omnia in omnibus.*' Of how great moment then is the Church which perfecteth all in all; Christ so wishing, ordaining, and bounteously imparting. Therefore whatsoever good the *Scripture* hath and bringeth to perfection; whatsoever it hath of fulness or solidity, that *it hath from the Church*, which filleth him who filleth all things. For Christ hungereth and thirsteth especially for this, to pour out Himself and all that He hath into some other: this hunger and thirst Christ gratifies. The Church receiveth all the goods of Christ as the body subject to the head; that they may be derived into all the members which make up the body annexed to the head; which body otherwise would be maimed and

headless. And lest this should be so, Christ hath by His divine bounty adjoined the Church to Himself; in which He may shew forth His powers, and unfold the amplitude of His Divinity and Humanity. There are many things on this subject, indeed, which Paul comprises within most weighty and brief sentences; but in my opinion there are no words in which he could more extol the excellency of the Church than in these: 'The *Church*,' says he, 'filleth him who filleth all in all.' Could he say anything more weighty, more ample, more sublime, more Divine? Whether he ever said anything of this kind, or anything like it, of the *Scripture*, we shall see in the sequel."

"Hear again what Paul says to Timothy; 'The Church is the pillar and the ground of the truth.' What, I pray, are we more to believe in than in the truth? But *the Church*, by reason of its being as closely as possible conjoined with God, *does not rest upon the truth, but the truth rests upon the Church*, as upon its pillar and ground; that we may know that the truth is nowhere but in the Church; that *when the Church is taken away, the truth must necessarily and entirely fall to the ground.* And assuredly whenever Paul makes mention of the Church, with what words more sublime or Divine than he used could he adorn it? For he knew of how great moment the subject was. If now it be true that we are to have entire faith in Christ and

God; then the nearer any one is to God and Christ, the more is faith to be placed in him. But what is nearer to Christ the head, than the body which is the Church? What is nearer to Christ the truth, than the Church which is the pillar and ground of the truth? What is nearer to Christ the Bridegroom, than the Church which is His Bride?"

"Moreover, this also deserves especial consideration; that *whatsoever authority Divine Scripture possesses, this was and is entirely from the Church;* for all its books were composed by sons of the Church. And further, although many have put forth numerous volumes concerning sacred things, as St. Luke has left on record; 'Forasmuch,' says he, 'as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration' of those things which have been fulfilled among us; nevertheless we see no authority in any of the books except in those which the Church has approved of. Nor, to ourselves individually, is there any reason to make it evident, why these books should be received rather than the others which are rejected; and why we should follow the faith of the one rather than of the other; unless it be because it was so ordained by the Church; this being a most perfectly true and evident mark, as it were, by which the canonical books are capable of being distinguished from those which are not canonical. . . . As Augustine says on the City of God, Book xviii., chap. xxxviii.; there is no rea-

son why some books are received and others rejected; except it be, that the prophets, and you may add the apostles, wrote some things by the afflatus of the Divine Spirit, and committed some by their own individual exertions to memory. But what is of the one, or of the other, the Church is the judge appointed by God. Since therefore the Divine Books were composed by the sons of the Church, and also confirmed by the Church; it assuredly follows that *there is much greater authority in the Church than there is in those Books.* For we see in Nature, that in causes there is always greater power than in effects; since the latter are on account of the former, and are referred to them, and to the good and advantage which they have in view. That of this kind are the *Sacred Scriptures* (viz., effects of causes), no one can deny."

"But come now; we understand the Book to be those alphabetical characters which are put into print, either without any profitable and true sense of the sentences, or else together with this sense. If you choose the first, then without doubt there is no difference between the Divine Scriptures and any other book; for in both cases the alphabetical characters are the same. If you choose what we said in the second case, then we affirm that this sense does not inhere in the letters and characters, but in the *Church* itself. Otherwise any one, on whatever passage he fixed his attention in the course of his read-

ing the Divine Books, would attain to its true meaning, nor would there ever have been or ever be in future any such thing as a heretic; yet that there are very many, even heretics themselves confess, and loudly complain. Nay further the truth is, that heretics do not derive their perverse opinions from any other source than from these very same documents rashly understood; as we shall afterwards shew at large."

"Now granting, what nevertheless is impossible, that there is *per se* any true sense in those alphabetical characters, and this too independently of the mind of the Church and the reader; still, even in this case, there is the same sense in the heart of the Church, and after a much more effective and noble manner; for the former is written with *ink*, the latter with the *Spirit;* the former is imprinted on paper, the latter upon the heart; the former is without any assent of the mind, the latter with the assent of a believing mind. What comparison is there between ink and the Divine Spirit? What, between paper and the human mind? What, between that which of itself does nothing, and that from which all our actions proceed? Will any one dare to compare ink with God? Will he dare to compare an inert substance, to an agent which operates so many and such mighty effects? Will he dare to pronounce alphabetical characters to be similar to the human mind, to which everything

that presents itself to the senses is in subordination?"

"Assuredly we are wont most willingly to follow the faith of those from whom no danger is to be apprehended; but to shun the authority of those by whom any mischief could be created for us. If we follow the commands of the Church, no danger threatens us from any quarter; since she is the pillar and ground of the truth, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against her. But if we adhere to the *Divine Books;* in this case, unless we shall have first most firmly adhered to the decrees of the *Church*, we shall most easily fall and rush headlong into deception. For all heresies proclaim that they rest upon the Sacred Volumes; that they embrace, kiss, and venerate them."

"Hear still further what says St. Paul, Eph. iv.; 'Christ, ascending up on high, led captivity captive; He gave gifts to men; and to some He gave apostles; to some prophets; to some evangelists; to some pastors for the perfecting of the saints; for the work of the ministry, for the edification of the body of Christ;' that is to say, it is *they who constitute the Church*, that perfect the saints; *not the Divine Books.*"

"If now that be true which St. Paul asserts, 'knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth;' then is charity not in *written books*, but in human hearts."

"Moreover faith cometh not from *reading*, but

from *hearing;* as the same Apostle testifies. Therefore whether we regard faith, without which it is impossible to please God; or charity, which is the first of the virtues; we must not have recourse to *books,* but to the *Church* and its members."

"And what is there, I ask, which procures and possesses among all men greater authority than signs and miracles? For hence it was that when John the Baptist sent his disciples to Christ to ask Him, 'Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?' Christ, in order to shew forth manifestly that He was that person, did many miracles before them as eye-witnesses; and hence most especially of all do they sin who believe not in miracles actually seen. For so Christ says in the Gospel of John; 'If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin; but now they have both seen and hated me and my Father.' Before all things then must faith be put in miracles; since, observes Paul, signs are for the unbelieving. But miracles are not put forth by the *Sacred Volumes,* but by *the sons of the Church.*

"What need I say more? Cast your eyes upon all things around you; reflect on them in your thoughts; imagine in your mind whatsoever you please; are they not all for the sake of the *Church?* For it hath God created every single thing, which can in any way fall within the mind's conception;

and *will any one dare to make the Scripture of more account than the Church?*"

"Take away the *Church*, and what need is there of *Scripture?* It is *almost a vain and unprofitable thing* of itself; but take away the Scripture, and the Church does not become vain and unprofitable; for the Church for a long time was without the Scripture; and after the day of Judgment will still continue without it."

"Have we not said that among other articles of faith there is this also, 'I believe in one holy Catholic Church?' Now we know that these articles are certain first principles, in which before all things faith is to be placed. But the *Scripture* is not to be placed among these first principles, although it is called holy and sacred; on the contrary, *Scripture* is proved and confirmed by the *Church* as by a first principle; since to the *Church* it belongs to reject and approve the *Scripture*."

"And what greater authority can there be, than that which is given to a person of opening and shutting heaven? or of having one spirit, body, and kingdom with God? or of being incapable of falling? But say some, The Church cannot teach otherwise than as the Scripture teaches. So Paul; 'Though an angel from heaven should preach any other Gospel beside that which is preached, let him be anathema.' What then? And has God left it on oath in the Sacred Writings, that there are many

things which He will do; and will He do them in truth, and will it be of greater authority with me and produce in me the greater faith, because it is so *written*, than because God *says* so, or *does* so? Or how do I know that a writing of this kind is the Word of God, except by the testimony of the *Church?* Attend now: did not Christ come to fulfil the Scriptures? And do I the more follow the faith of Christ, because there is a something *written* concerning Him; than because God *said* from heaven, 'Hear ye Him?' Was it to the *Sacred Books* that He very often referred the obstinate Jews, or was it to *works?* It was but rarely, only once or twice, that He said, 'Search the Scriptures;' but very often, 'The Father hath given testimony of me;' very often, 'If ye believe not me, believe in my *works.*'"

"Heretics again argue, that the Holy Spirit gave the Sacred Books. Imbecile argument! And did not the Holy Spirit ordain the Church? Does He not reside in it, and after a much more effective and illustrious manner than in *books?* Moreover, hath not the same Spirit engraved upon the mind of the Church whatsoever is referred to the Sacred Books; and much more? Is not that which is *written* almost *dumb*, and *feeble*, unless the mind of the *Church* be in it? The Church, say they, is appointed to bear testimony to the Divine Books; who can tolerate such stuff? Is the Church for the

Scriptures, or the Scriptures for the Church, for which are all things that have been created by God? Had they said the Scriptures were appointed to bear testimony to the truth, which is that which Christ said of Himself, they would not have erred from the truth. But God is more in the *Church* than in *writings;* and so are the truth, and the testimony to the truth in like manner."

. . . "Wherefore, if any one in this question would wish to take away all arguments by a single answer; let him say, that the Scriptures consist not in reading but in understanding; or with Jeremiah and Paul, that the law of Christ is not in the letter, but in the spirit; not written on tables, but on the heart. Now since it is granted through Christ, that to God and the Church pertain the same Spirit, Body, and Kingdom; so does the devil, who formerly drove from Paradise Adam and Eve, who were deceived by his snares and frauds, endeavour, through Antichrist and his companions, to deprive us of these goods." . . .

Such is the statement by Bozius of the relations between the Church and the written Word of God; —a statement which has recently been confirmed by Cardinal Patrizzi in his remarks upon the late Encyclical of the Pope, in which he says—"The* faithful, who shew themselves such in word and act,

* *Dublin Review*, April, 1865; p. 449. *Note.*

recognize in the voice of the Church's visible head *the very Word of God*. . . . That head has authority to address the whole Church; and he who listens not to him, declares himself as no longer appertaining to the Church, as no longer making part of Christ's flock, and accordingly, as no longer having a right to the eternal inheritance in heaven."

This view of the subject naturally arises from identifying the Church as the body of Christ with the Humanity which He assumed, and as having the same intercommunication of Divine properties. Now the body of Christ is represented by the *Temple:* the written Word of God is also represented by the Temple, and as such has an inner and an innermost meaning, represented by the Sanctuary and the Holy of Holies.

Is this the case with the decrees of the Church? Or, have we here some other form of alleged Divine Truth sitting in the Temple?

In the Holy of Holies were deposited the Ten Commandments of the Law; The Ten Commandments are the Word of God, on obedience to which depended eternal salvation; and as the edicts of the Pope and Councils are also the so-called Word of God, on obedience to which depends eternal salvation; it is evident, that we have one Word of God given by Jehovah upon Mount Sinai, and another Word of God, equally divine, given by the Pope at the Vatican. Both are equally the written Word

of God: the Church can subsist without the written Word of God, commonly called the Scriptures; but it cannnot subsist without the written Word, commonly called Encyclicals, Bulls, and decrees of Councils. These documents are otherwise called *Tradition;* and tradition is defined to be "the* Living Word, perpetuated in the hearts of believers." When we are taught by this Word, the Sacred Scriptures are said to be unnecessary to our acquisition of their general contents.

Now it has been seen that, in the Golden Age or Adamic Church, the Word was, but was not written; consequently the Church was then before the written Word. But the Word itself also was before the writing. It was the Word which created the Church, not the Church the Word. The writing which begins after the Church, only places the Church before the writing, but not before the Word: in a change of Dispensation the Word changes not itself, but only the mode in which it communicates itself to the Church. At first the Word communicated itself inwardly through the medium of angels; but when angelic intercourse ceased, the same Word communicated itself outwardly through the medium of writing. The Word did not begin to be when it began to be written; nor was the Church before the Word, for that would be a worse than

* Moehler's *Symbolism*, chap. v., sec. 38.

Arian doctrine. What then shall we think of the teaching in the present day, which would place the Church before the Word?

It is true that on this subject we read in the *Arcana*,*—"In the most ancient Church the Word was not; but immediate revelation to the man of the Church, and by it conjunction of the Lord with man." When, however, it is said, "*the Word was not*," Swedenborg is speaking of the *written* Word; the truths of the Word being then communicated to man directly by angels. But to infer that as a written Word was not necessary to the Church then, so a written Word is not necessary to the Church now, is to suppose the conditions of the Church to be in both cases the same; and that in the present day the Church is in open communion with angels. Yet the Bishop of Natal says, in his introductory remarks to the *Pentateuch*, chap. i., "Our belief in the Living God would remain as sure as ever, though not the Pentateuch only, but the whole Bible were removed." Something of the same kind is maintained by the author of *The Claims of the Bible and of Science*,†—"I have acknowledged one foundation as laid for us all. That foundation is *not* the letter of any book. That foundation being our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, could not be shaken if

* Art. 10,632.

† Page 140.

the whole Bible were taken from us. I say this on the authority of the Bible; I should contradict the Bible if I said otherwise."*

The authority of the Bible for this assertion is not given us by the writer; in the meantime, it will be seen in the sequel that we are in a fair way for trying the experiment.

We have mentioned these things because, in tracing the course of the transition of ages, we have referred to the Word, first as unwritten and afterwards written, as being the centre of all the movements of Divine Providence in regard to Dispen-

* Probably the writer was referring to 1 *Cor.* iii. 11; "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," Who is thus regarded as the only foundation. Yet in *Eph.* ii. 20, the Church is built upon "the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets." What if it should be argued, that as Jesus Christ is the only real foundation; that foundation would not have been shaken, had the Apostles and Prophets been removed altogether? Surely there is a sense in which the *letter* of the Bible is a foundation of the Truth. "The Word in the sense of the letter," says the *Arcana*, art. 10,127, "is representative and thence significative of the celestial and spiritual things which are in the superior heavens, and are thus presented in a way of accommodation to the apprehensions of men. Thus also it serves the heavens for a basis and a foundation." See *Apoc.* xxi. 12: also the note of Estius on *Eph.* ii. 20; also that of De Lyra and the *Glossa Ordinaria*, in both of which the teaching of the Old and New Testaments is called a *foundation* on which both Prophets and Apostles themselves built. In this case Jesus Christ is said by many ancient writers to be "*Fundamentum fundamentorum.*"

sations and Churches. If at any point we lose sight of that centre; more especially if we substitute another for it, such as the Church; the only rule by which we can interpret the signs of the times, or measure as it were the course of Divine Providence, is not that of the Word but of the Church.

We now see, however, that at the end of the dispensation, another power has been raised up to contest this right with the Church; and to consummate the Age by destroying both the Word and the Church. This power is that of Modern Science. Authority is power; but knowledge is power. The contest is now between Modern Science and Church authority; for Modern Science claims to be interpreter, as well as the Church; nay, to substitute itself in the place of the Church, as the one grand centre in relation to which all the dispensations of Divine Providence, all the progress of the human mind, are in future to be conducted. The only effect of this movement hitherto has been, to substitute the extinction of the written Word for the perversion of it; or one mode of extinction for another. The movement is commenced as a contest between Church authority and Modern Science. The Church substituted itself for the written Word; and now Science substitutes itself for the Church.

"We are entering," says the Bishop of Natal, "into* a time when, as I believe, the war will again

* *Natal Sermons*, p. 194.

be internecine between these two powers—between mere blind Church authority, which seeks to enforce the dogmas of past ages, regardless of the mighty intellectual advance which has been made by the human race since the dawn of the Reformation period, and the living Spirit the true Lord of the Church, the Spirit of Truth; and I say that we cannot any of us expect to escape the conflict; we may not desire to do so; we must boldly face our duty like men, and not in shrinking cowardice or easy indolence leave the battle to be fought by our children." . . .

We have seen what has been effected by the Catholic Church and its traditions; we proceed to point out what remains to be effected by Science and Philosophy.*

"True religion," says Lessing, "consists not of historical facts or written documents, but in eternal spiritual truths."—This we acknowledge; but then it is assumed, that the spiritual truths are not in the historical facts or written documents. This is one great discovery said to have been made at the Reformation.

"Religion is older than the Bible: the Bible is founded on religion, not religion on it; nor is Christianity based on the New Testament; it existed before any part of the New Testament was written:

* *The Tubingen School*, by R. W. Mackay, M.A.; p. 60. Also *Preface*, p. 5.

apostles and evangelists did not make it true, but taught it because it was true: there was an interval of time before any of them wrote, and a still longer ere the canon was formed. And if religion existed before and independent of the Bible, it may well survive its destruction."

"Shall not the religious elements in our nature," writes the translator of Spinoza,* "dovetail with the rest of our wonderful economy; our sensational be worthy of our *scientific* conceptions of God and of the universe? The day has long gone by for assuming that man can only be religious according to the Hebrew Scriptures. Religion is a thing apart from parchment, ink, and paper; and the Hebrew Scriptures, themselves but evidences of the existence of a certain order of primitive faculties in the mind of man, are neither the only nor yet the oldest records of a religious system extant."

Be it so then: no book-religion for the scientific man; no Bible-Christianity; religion is not a thing of pen, ink, and paper.—Is it the modern Catholic who is saying this, or is it the modern Rationalist? We are only quoting the language of the Rationalist, who, in his turn, is only re-echoing that of the Church.

Well, then, the religion of the philosopher and of the Catholic are both independent of the Bible;

* Introduction to the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, p. 12.

for even were the Bible destroyed, religion would remain to the Rationalist and tradition to the Catholic. The Rationalist and the Catholic, therefore, may equally dispense with the Bible. This being the case, the Rationalist can now appeal to the Reformation.

"Luther* emancipated us from tradition; but our escape from the still more intolerable burden of the letter is still to come. When, O Luther, thou great but ill appreciated name, will any one give us a Christianity such as thou wouldest now teach, such as Christ Himself would now sanction."

The literal sense of Scripture is the Outer Court. Luther had the credit of being one of those who emancipated us from allegorical fancies and spiritualizing processes; and confining our faith to the simplicity of the letter, thus to the boundaries of the Outer Court. The outer Court is now felt to be a place of "intolerable slavery." We want a second Luther to emancipate us from the bondage of the letter. Who is this second Luther? The illustrious Spinoza!—"In† the face of unlimited obloquy he performed the same daring feat in regard to the Bible, which Luther, powerfully supported, had already achieved in regard to the Church."—What is the consequence? With Spinoza as the leader,

* Mackay's *Tubingen School:* Preface.

† *Ibid.*, Preface.

the axes and hammers of modern critics, divines, men of science, and philosophers, are heard on every side busied in destroying the last vestige of the Outer Court.

Now, as we are told that this is the inauguration of a new age with regard to the Bible, the age of a revolution in those notions of Divine inspiration which had hitherto prevailed; it is of the first importance that we turn our attention to the origin and progress of this revolution.

The literal sense of Scripture has been regarded by the Protestant Church as, in general, the only true and certain sense: that literal sense is perceived by the light of the natural understanding. According to this light, the world was created in six days; the serpent was endowed with the gift of language; the earth was drowned in a universal flood; the Mosaic Law is replete with precepts, statutes, and judgments which are absurd, or immoral, or impossible; or which have no relation to Christianity, and consequently are abrogated and obsolete. Now the light of modern science comes from God—"When* He is pleased to give us light, we dare not shut our eyes to its shining, and determine still to grope on in obscurity. If the light of modern science comes from God—and surely we believe it does—it must be as great a sin to despise,

* *Natal Sermons*, p. 9.

or to disregard it, as to despise and disregard the Bible."—Now the light of modern science is *natural light*, the light of the natural understanding; but it is the same natural understanding which had been previously regarded by the Protestant Church as the legitimate interpreter of the Scriptures; and as it is the sense of Scripture which is Scripture, and that sense is said to be the natural sense only, and the natural sense is now proved by Science to be wrong; the Scripture, it is said, is proved to be wrong, and where it is wrong it is a sin not to reject it.

Undoubtedly Spinoza was a distinguished critic in this respect.

"Assuming* as we do," says he, "that the supreme right to interpret the Bible belongs to every one individually, we conclude that the standard of interpretation should be nothing but the *natural light or understanding* which is common to all; and not any supernatural light, or any extrinsic authority." Accordingly—

We are to explain Scripture by Scripture; but whatever of life and peace of mind is needful to our conduct, may be comprehended by the *natural understanding;* as however there are many things in Scripture alleged to be supernatural, they are "really more matters of curiosity than of importance."

"May† it not be true," says Dr. Colenso, "that

* *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, p. 168, 161.

† *Pentateuch*, Preface to Part iii., p. 177.

this light of Criticism may be but one of the many coloured rays of modern Science which come to us from the Father of lights in this our own age of wonderful illumination; and which are meant to blend together into the pure white light of truth—that light which our spirits need, and which His wisdom and His love at this time impart to us?"

The answer to this question is contained, as follows, in the *True Christian Religion* :—

. . . "The* light of heaven, in which the spiritual sense of the Word is, descends by influx into the natural light in which the literal sense of the Word is; and illuminates a man's intellectual principle, which is called his rational principle; and makes him see and acknowledge Divine truths, both where they are manifest and where they lie concealed."

You will see that in the *Natal Sermons*, natural light and spiritual light are made to blend into one; so that natural light makes a part of spiritual light and *vice versâ;* which is the same mistake as to make the body a part of the soul or *vice versâ*, thus to blend them together into one substance. According to the *True Christian Religion*, on the contrary, spiritual light descends into natural light, actuates it from within, and subordinates it to itself just as the soul does the body. Doubtless the light of the natural understanding may lead to great truths with

* Art. 215, 401.

regard to the laws of Nature; but in regard to spiritual things, it is so full of fallacies and negations as in Scripture to be called *darkness.* Accordingly in merely natural light, great spiritual truths have been mistaken for great scientific untruths. Yet this natural light is claimed as the light of modern Criticism!

For "now I think,"* says Spinoza, "I have exposed the true method of interpreting Scripture, and sufficiently explained my views of its value. I do not doubt but every one will see, that this method requires nothing save *natural light* or *understanding;* for the nature and excellence of *natural light* consists especially in this; that it leads by legitimate deduction from things known, or assumed as known, to a knowledge of things obscure or unknown; nor is there any other concession which our method of enquiry demands."

Now this natural light is no other than that which Protestant interpreters have made use of in ascertaining the natural or literal sense of Scripture; or, as some have called it, the native simplicity of the letter. Accordingly, the natural proceeds to resolve into itself the supernatural; and miracles there are none. The natural, in the attempt to subordinate to itself that which is superior to it, necessarily destroys its supernatural character. As the

* *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, p. 161.

spiritual is above the natural, it is in this sense supernatural; but when subordinated to the natural, it altogether disappears, being converted into the natural, and as such regarded as expressing an untruth or a superstition. Accordingly the result of Biblical interpretation, conducted upon this principle, is thus stated by a learned modern commentator.

"The* revelation embodied in Scripture is no more guaranteed than any other alleged supernatural communication; it is philosophically impossible, and historically undemonstrable; it has taught men nothing reliable whether with regard to the history of his race, the origin of the universe, or the development of our planet: it can teach him nothing reliable with regard to his future; for prophecy is subject to error like every other human speculation; it discloses the motive, the sanction, and the law of man's labours from points of view which have been essentially modified by later convictions; and there is no Holy Spirit distinct from the intellect of man; the books which compose the Bible must therefore be measured by the ordinary standard of human faculties, and the result of an impartial survey will be, that they possess indeed those peculiar merits which fitted them for religious guides during many

* *Commentary on Leviticus*, part i., p. 290. By Dr. Kalisch. *Theology of the Past and Future.*

generations; but that now they are eclipsed by other works in historical value, in comprehensiveness of facts, in depth of philosophy, and accuracy of science."

Bishop Marsh, indeed, admits that there is a Holy Spirit distinct from the intellect of man; for he says, that* "the Christian interpreter will pray to God for a blessing on his endeavours; he will pray for that ordinary assistance of the Holy Spirit without which all our endeavours must be fruitless; but he will not expect that extraordinary assistance which was granted of old and for higher purposes." The ordinary assistance, in virtue of which we are to reject the tradition of the Roman Catholic Church, is, he assures us, that of reason and learning. By *reason* is clearly meant natural reason; by the *Spirit of Truth*, the Spirit of natural truth; by *the light of the Holy Spirit*, the natural light of the understanding, which is that of reason and learning, and which both Spinoza and Dr. Kalisch are ready to welcome. Nevertheless, Bishop Marsh has declared this reason and learning to be the sole and legitimate agents in virtue of which tradition is to be extinguished. The advances which have been made in Science and Philosophy have given a corresponding impetus to reason and learning; and when reason and learning have interpreted the Bible according

* *Lectures on the Criticism and Interpretation of the Bible*, p. 313.

to that natural light of the understanding which have been derived from Science and Philosophy, our belief in the inspiration of the Bible is, as we shall see, completely undermined; and a change in human thought, *i.e.*, in our religious consciousness, is being silently effected, analogous to the change in the transition from one Dispensation to another.

"The* inspiration of the Bible," says a modern writer, "is the foundation of our whole belief; and it is a grave matter if we are uncertain to what extent it reaches, or how much and what it guarantees to us as true. We cannot live on probabilities. The faith in which we can live bravely and die in peace, must be a certainty so far as it professes to be a faith at all, or it is nothing. It may be that all intellectual efforts to arrive at it are in vain; that it is given to those to whom it is given, and withheld from those from whom it is withheld. It may be that the existing belief is undergoing a silent modification, like those to which the Dispensations of religion have been successively subjected; or, again, it may be that to the Creed, as it is already established, there is nothing to be added, and nothing any more to be taken from it. At this moment, however, the most vigorous minds appear

* *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, by J. A. Froude, M.A., late Fellow of Ex. Coll., Oxford, pp. 151 to 183. *A Plea for the Free Discussion of Theological Difficulties.—Criticism and The Gospel History.*

least to see their way to a conclusion; and notwithstanding all the school and church building, the extended episcopate, and the religious newspapers, a general doubt is coming up like a thunderstorm against the wind, and blackening the sky. Those who cling most tenaciously to the faith in which they were educated, yet confess themselves perplexed. They know what they believe; but why they believe it, or why they should require others to believe, they cannot tell or cannot agree. Between the authority of the Church and the authority of the Bible, the testimony of history and the testimony of the Spirit, the ascertained facts of science and the contradictory facts which seem to be revealed; the minds of men are tossed to and fro, harassed by the changed attitude in which scientific investigation has placed us all towards accounts of supernatural occurrences. We thrust the subject aside; we take refuge in practical work; we believe, perhaps, that the situation is desperate, and hopeless of improvement; we refuse to let the question be disturbed. But we cannot escape from our shadow; and the spirit of uncertainty will haunt the world like an uneasy ghost, till we take it by the throat like men."

Well, then, it seems that with the aid of the natural light which is conveyed to us by reason and learning, the old doctrine concerning the inspiration of the Bible is seen to require revision; for, be it

remembered, the light of Science comes from God as truly as the light of Revelation; and yet when Revelation is thus viewed in the light of Science coming from God, all is doubt, perplexity, uncertainty, if not desperation! But further—

"The Church authorities still refuse to look their difficulties in the face; they prescribe for mental troubles the established doses of Paley and Pearson; they refuse dangerous questions as sinful, and tread the round of common place in placid comfort. But it will not avail. Their pupils grow to manhood, and fight the battle for themselves, unaided by those who ought to have stood by them in their trial, and could not or would not; and the bitterness of their conflicts, and the end of most of them in heart-broken uncertainty, or careless indifference, is too notorious to all who care to know about such things" (p. 156).

"We are arrived visibly at one of those recurring times when the accounts are called in for audit; when the title deeds are to be looked through, and established opinions again tested. It is a process which has been repeated more than once in the world's history; the last occasion and greatest being the Reformation of the sixteenth century; and the experience of that matter might have satisfied the most timid, that truth has nothing to fear, and that religion emerges out of such trials stronger and brighter than before" (p. 164).

"If the English learned clergy had faith as a grain of mustard seed, they would be the first to take possession of the field; they would look the difficulty in the face fearlessly and frankly; and we should not be tossing, as we are now, in an ocean of uncertainty; ignorant whether, if things seem obscure to us, the fault is with our intellects or our hearts" (p. 164).

..."It may be assumed, we think, with no want of charity, that those who doubt the truth of the Old Testament, extend their incredulity to the New; that the point of their disbelief, toward which they are trenching their way through the weak places in the Pentateuch, is the Gospel narrative itself" (p. 167).

"The truth of the Gospel history is now more doubted in Europe than at any time since the conversion of Constantine."

"Every thinking person, who has been brought up a Christian, and desires to remain a Christian, yet who knows anything of what is passing in the world, is looking to be told on what evidence the New Testament claims to be received" (p. 183).

"Of evidence for the Resurrection, in the common sense of the word, there may be enough to shew that something extraordinary occurred; but not enough, unless we assume the fact to be true on other grounds, to produce any absolute and unhesitating conviction; and inasmuch as the Resurrection is the keystone of Christianity, the belief in

it must be something far different from that suspended judgment in which history alone would leave us" (p. 152).

"There is no evidence, which a jury would admit, that He, (viz. *Christ*,) was ever actually dead" (p. 151).

Disbelief in the Old Testament, we are told, is only trenching its way to disbelief in the New.

Accordingly, it is candidly said by Dr. Colenso, that—"Assuredly* the progress in modern criticism will disturb the popular belief in many parts of the New Testament, as well as the Old;" and a work has very recently appeared which may be regarded as a suitable illustration of the statement. The work is entitled, *An Introduction to the Study of the New Testament, Critical, Exegetical, and Theological;* and the reader will observe what use is made of the terms, "traditional," "unhistorical," "mythical," "unpsychological," "apocryphal," "improbable," "inconsistent," "unaccountable," etc.

"The† birth of Jesus, its announcement to shepherds by angels, the circumcision and presentation of the child in the Temple, with the prophecy of Simeon and Anna, complete this introductory history, which is interspersed with the traditional,

* *Natal Sermons*, p. 195.

† Vol. ii., p. 26. By Dr. Davidson.

unhistoric, and mythical. The announcement of the angel to Mary, and the angelic communication to Zacharias, are unhistorical. The journey of Mary to Elizabeth, and the circumstances connected with it, partake of the marvellous and unpsychological."

The* Gospel now ascribed to Matthew—"contains several unhistorical and mythical elements. The most palpable example of this is in chap. xxvii. 52, where we are told that at the expiration of Jesus the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints who slept came out of their resting-places after the resurrection of their Lord, and even went into the holy city, where they appeared to many. The apocryphal nature of this account is apparent."

"Again,† the narrative in chap. xxvii. 62—66; xxviii. 11—15, respecting the setting of a watch at the sepulchre, and the bribing of them, is historically improbable. . . . And the conduct of the Sanhedrists is unaccountable in instructing the soldiers to spread a false report, instead of calling them to account for their delinquency. It is not likely that they would have acted toward Pilate as is represented, or that he would have been satisfied with their representation."

"The‡ representation given by Luke that after

* Vol. i., p. 484.

† *Ibid.*

‡ Vol. ii., p. 338.

the resurrection He ate and drank with the Apostles (Acts x. 41), and shewed Himself to them with a body of flesh and bones (Luke xxiv. 39, 40), is inconsistent with our Gospel (of St. John). His bodily resurrection is not intimated in the present document. *He appeared* to the disciples and Thomas, that they might believe; but the appearances were not those of an earthly body re-animated. It should be observed that Thomas, like the rest, was satisfied *not because he touched Him*, which he abstained from as unnecessary, but because he saw Him. The description is inconsistent with itself; for how could a pneumatic body have clothes like a gardener's; or shew the print of nails in the hands, and the mark of a wound in the side. It is, therefore, unhistorical."

"The* subject of the Resurrection must be looked at from the standpoint of the Evangelist's time, not from ours. Should we view it as they did, the narratives must be taken in the plain literal sense. But if philosophy and science suggest the rejection of oriental conceptions, the growth of ideas from small beginnings, and the transforming power of tradition, the Resurrection will present a different aspect."

With respect to the downfall of the Jewish State and the Second Coming, as recorded in St. Matthew:—

* Vol. ii., p. 339.

"That* Jesus could not have spoken as He is represented, is apparent from the way in which John writes in the *Apocalypse* respecting the fate of Jerusalem. . . . Without denying the authenticity of the eschatological discourses of Jesus reported in the Gospels, we believe that they are reproduced inexactly. Jewish ideas and expressions peculiar to the early disciples are incorporated with them, which obscure their original sense."

"The† glorified earth is the heaven of the Apocalypse. This view is far inferior to the moral idea of the kingdom of heaven announced by Jesus. The New Jerusalem, too, is a picture of the old, gorgeously renovated and adorned; shewing that the seer could not divest himself of his narrow and sensuous ideas."

In the way of *Preface* to these results of modern criticism and interpretation, the author observes:

"It‡ has hitherto been the custom in England to ignore views contrary to traditional opinions; if not to speak of them with strong condemnation. Our theologians, too often content with present attainments and averse to severe thought, have tried to shut out critical results long accepted as certain by the leading scholars of Germany, Holland, and

* Vol. i., p. 500.

† Vol. i., p. 354.

‡ Page 7.

France. But a better day already dawns; when reason, the candle of the Lord within us, will be vilified no more, and the highest evidence for the divine origin of Scripture be found in the spiritual nature of man; when the sense of the written Word will be seen in its native simplicity, divested of the allegorical fancies, the spiritualizing processes, and the distorted forms, which injudicious interpreters have forced it to bear."

Be it so: our only object is to shew in what part of our present Dispensation or of *the Temple*, criticisms and interpretations of this kind have their place. According to Swedenborg, the external of the Word, or the Word in its literal sense, is represented by *the outer court*, in which respect he was not advancing any thing new; for Jerome had long before observed that—"The courts of the Lord into which we are to go forth, are the various Books of the Law and the Prophets, through which we must enter into the one court of the New Testament." Well then; in this *outer court*, our spiritual nature by the aid of reason the candle of the Lord, discovers the highest evidence for the Divine origin of Scripture.

Now Spinoza, Kalisch, and others of this school call the spiritual nature of man the same with that of the natural reason. This natural reason is in the *outer court* of the human mind; the candle of the Lord is modern criticism; and by its light, the

Resurrection of the Lord is perceived to be a very doubtful matter; the resurrection of the saints to be unhistorical, mythical, apocryphal: the consequent "bitterness of mental conflicts," says one of the critics and philosophers who was still guided by this candle of the Lord, "and the end of them in heart-broken uncertainty or careless indifference, is too notorious to all who care to know about such things."—These critics and philosophers have now stated their own case. Is there nothing wrong in a mode of interpretation which makes such a chaos of the Scriptures and of the human mind? If there be, what is the cause of it? The cause is distinctly pointed out by Swedenborg when he says, that to such minds *the spiritual is not anything.* The commandment to John with regard to the *outer court* is just what critics and philosophers are obeying with regard to the Temple—EJICE FORAS.

If it be true that our Lord's description of the destruction of Jerusalem be hieroglyphical of the events which are to befall the Christian Church in the latter days; if it be true that in any legitimate sense the Scriptures are the *Temple of God;* if it be true that, as such, not one stone will be left standing upon another, what becomes of the Church; if *the Temple* represents *the Church* as certainly as it represents the Bible? The Church was before the Bible, says the Catholic, and therefore may exist without the Bible. Religion was before the

Bible, says the critic, and therefore may exist without the Bible. How strange that Catholic and critic should join in the same cry! Placing together, then, the objections of both parties, we have the following agencies at work against the Scriptures as the Word of God; and teaching—

First, that Tradition, or the decrees of the Church, may be substituted as another Word of God in the place of that which is written; and as of more importance in this respect—that the Church might survive the destruction of those Scriptures which Christ came to fulfil; but would not survive the destruction of the decrees of the Church which Christ, nevertheless, did not come to fulfil.

Secondly, that it is no matter what becomes of the Temple, so long as the *outer court* remains, with which alone we are concerned.

Thirdly, that, nevertheless, the *outer court* cannot remain; being trodden under foot by critics, men of science, philosophers, and others.

Fourthly, that in the place of the Scriptures may be substituted Science and Philosophy as another Word of God; not as a *Temple*, but as a grand *Outward Court;* in which truth is to be found in the correspondence not of the natural with the spiritual, but of the natural with the natural, or of ideas with the phenomena of the outward world.

Mankind, it seems, must have a *Word of God* of some kind or other; and if the Scriptures be set

aside or undervalued, Tradition and the decrees of the Church will take their place and assume to be the Word, the knowledge of which is alone necessary to salvation. Or, if this Word also be set aside; Philosophy and Science will assume the office of the Scriptures, and present themselves as our only unerring guide.

Now it is certain, that, whether rightly or wrongly, natural truth or the truths of philosophy and science, nay, even of the Scriptures as interpreted by the natural understanding only, have ever been regarded in the Church as symbolized by IRON. An Age, therefore, whose characteristic is the cultivation of natural truth as distinguished from spiritual, is an *age of iron;* just as the age distinguished for the cultivation of spiritual truth is called the *silver age;* for where qualities are designated by metals, *iron*, being a lower order of metals, signifies a lower order of truth. Hence, where an improvement in the moral quality of the age is foretold, we read—"For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver." In Daniel, where these metals are used to designate the quality of the Ages respectively, we find that the last Age before the Advent is that of *iron mixed with clay—clay* being of a still lower order than *iron*, and signifying in a good or an evil sense the lower order of affections, or those of the natural man: in a good sense, as where it is said, "We are the clay, and thou

our potter:" in a bad sense, as where it is said, "He brought me up out of the *miry clay*." Hence the following observation in the *Apocalypse Explained;*—

"The* Ancients called the succession of times, from the Most Ancient to the last, the ages of gold, silver, brass, and iron. The same are signified by the image of Nebuchadnezzar which he saw in a dream; whose head was pure *gold*, its breast and arms *silver*, its belly and thighs *brass*, its legs *iron*, and its feet partly *iron* and partly *clay*. By this image are signified the successive states of the Church in this world, from the Most Ancient times down to the present. The present state of the Church is thus described,—'And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of man; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.' By *iron* is signified the truth of faith; but when there is no truth of faith, but faith without truth, then is *iron* mixed with *miry clay*, which do not cohere. By the 'seed of man' with which they will mingle themselves, is signified the truth of the Word. This is the state of the Church at this day."

According to this account, the last state of the

* Art. 1322, 176; *Divine Providence*, art. 328. See also *The Coronis; Apocalypse Revealed*, art. 913; and our Appendix.

Church is that of *incoherence*—a state in which the truth of the Word, in its natural or literal sense, is mixed up with the thoughts and affections of the merely natural mind; hence with doctrines of faith which are incoherent with themselves and with the Word of God; or with systems of philosophy and science equally incoherent with spiritual truth. The result is, a degenerate and incoherent theology, ready to fall to pieces at the first blow given by The Truth.

If, however, this represents the state of the Church in the latter days; and if, as we have seen, the state of the Church is indissolubly united with that of Biblical interpretation; we must look to incoherency of Biblical interpretation as the source of corresponding incoherency in the Church.* In illustration of this remark, compare the interpretation of *Leviticus* in which the literal sense of the Word is seen from spiritual light, with that in which it is seen from natural light. "Seen from spiritual light," says the *Apocalypse Revealed*,† "the literal sense of the Word is translucent, as in the case of precious stones. Because Divine Truth in the literal sense is in natural light, and Divine Truth in the spiritual sense is in spiritual light; wherefore, when spiritual light flows into natural light

* We are here considering the prophecy of *Daniel* only in one point of view—its relation to Biblical interpretation.

† Art. 911. See also *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 7153.

with a man who is reading the Word, he is illuminated, and sees truths there; for the objects of spiritual light are truths. The Word also, in its literal sense, is of such a nature, that the more a man is illuminated by the influx of the light of heaven, so much the more does he see truths *in their connection and thence in their form;* and the more he thus sees them, the more interiorly is his rational mind opened; for the rational mind is the very receptacle of the light of heaven."

Interpreted in the spiritual sense, the Book of *Leviticus* treats of the glorification of the Lord, and of the processes of regeneration. Now, as a matter of fact, Swedenborg observes, that the truths thus contained in the Word are connected together in the most beautiful form and order. On the other hand; as a matter of fact, interpret *Leviticus* by the natural light of the understanding only to the exclusion of the spiritual sense, and the following is the statement made by a modern critic :*—

"The precept with regard to the hides of burnt-offerings stands entirely isolated. The laws on the portions of bloodless offerings to be left to the priests, are dismembered. The injunction which forbids the eating of fat and blood, which should conclude the laws of sacrifice, interrupts the regulations on thank-offerings; and is later repeated in an unexpected

* Dr. Kalisch's *Commentary on Leviticus.* Part i., *Preface.*

context. The interdiction of the worship of Moloch occurs in the midst of ordinances relating to unlawful marriages; and a renewed enactment against wizards and necromancy is so abrupt in the place which it occupies, that it has given offence even to orthodox writers. The introductory section on sacrifices is repeatedly supplemented, after commands on totally different subjects. The same irregularity is observed in the laws concerning the priests and the service of the sanctuary. The acts and means for purification ordained for lepers are, by an intervening clause, unsymmetrically disjoined from the description of leprosy. But above all, the portion designed to treat of moral and civil laws is perplexingly intermixed with a vast variety of heterogeneous precepts, destroying all unity, nay, every trace of continuity: it is impossible that a thoughtful legislator should have composed and promulgated such an agglomeration of laws, from which he could hardly expect any practical effect. It is of no avail to attempt a systematic classification: all efforts, however able and laborious, so far from successful, prove the incongruity still more striking, by the forced expedients which they necessitate."

Here assuredly not one stone is left standing upon another which is not thrown down. The same principle of interpretation has been applied to the whole of the Old Testament, and has produced corresponding results.

Now what does Swedenborg say upon the subject of this apparent incoherency?

"The style of writing," says he,* "which belonged to the Ancient Church was such, that it was not so much the letter, or the literal sense, which flowed into the intellect, as rather the spirit, or the spiritual sense; whatever might be the meaning of the words. In order, however, in the present day to perceive the spiritual sense of the words of God Messiah, especially in the Old Testament, the literal sense has first to be explained; and it has afterwards to be shewn what the spiritual sense is; which sense is the very sense of the Word of God Messiah, and is the life that is in the words. This is a manifest sign that in ancient times men were more spiritual than they are now; or, what amounts to the same, did not stick fast in the literal sense, but in this sense beheld spiritual things. The case is different in the present day; for now that alone is welcomed and received with applause which is continuously coherent in the literal sense—a sign that, in the present day, men are become natural; for, provided only the literal sense follows in decent order and has a fair sound, this is the sense that is favoured.

"The reason that the letter, or literal sense, of

* *Adversaria*, Exodus, chap. xiv., vol. iii., part i. See also *Arcana Cœlestia*, 1756, 3376, 6352, 2343, 10,206, 10,633.

the words of the Old Testament reads as if it were unconnected; as may everywhere be evident to persons who peruse the prophecies (in *Genesis*, for instance, xlix. 2—28; *Deuteronomy*, xxxiii. 6—29); is, because at that period men could perceive an internal sense only in some particular parts. The case was otherwise at the time when God spoke to man by word of mouth."

As the knowledge of the spiritual sense declined, it began to be perceived in the Scriptures only here and there. Hence the apparent want of connection between different passages. In proportion as the spiritual sense vanishes, so does the connection; till finally all is incoherence.

Here and there the beauty of the fallen stones has been recognized as divine; but it is the beauty of a ruin—all is chaos, and incoherency. "I find insuperable difficulties,"* says the Bishop of Natal, speaking of the Pentateuch, "with regard to the miracles or supernatural revelations of Almighty God recorded in it—I cannot as a true man consent any longer to shut my eyes to the absolute, palpable, self-contradictions of the narrative."

We are told, indeed, that the Scriptures are the Word of God; but only in the sense in which a Church is the house of God.† We have already

* *Pentateuch*, Introductory Remarks, p. 27.

† *Ibid.*, Preface to part iii.

seen, however, that it is not a modern building, but the old Jewish Temple, that represents the Scriptures; it was not a parish Church, but the Temple of God, that was opened in heaven.

That *Temple*, as we have seen, was the *Scriptures:* the opening of the Temple was the opening of the Scriptures. What was the result of this opening? The Temple was seen to be filled with *smoke;* and no man was able to enter into the Temple.

"As if he should say," observes Cardinal Hugo on this passage, "Although the divine judgments are open to the faithful, as also *the secrets of Scripture*, or the mysteries of the Church; nevertheless they are closed to the wicked, who are blinded by the *smoke* of their ignorance and obstinacy." Whence he says that "the *Temple of God, i.e.*, the Church, or the *Scriptures*, was filled with *smoke;* that is, with obscurity in relation to the reprobate, who see not those mysteries of God which are yet open to the good. And in this appear the majesty and power of God, who shutteth to the unworthy, and openeth to the worthy; whence he adds, 'from the majesty of God,' who hath the keys of David, who shutteth and no man openeth, and openeth and no man shutteth. 'And no one could enter in,' that is, to see *the mysteries of Scripture*, and penetrate into them; for their wickedness blinded them, *Wisdom* ii. 22, 'until the seven plagues of the seven angels were consummated.'"

Albertus Magnus observes, that, "In this passage it is shewn that the mysteries of God are opened to the faithful, and hidden from the unfaithful. . . . The *Temple*, that is, the *Scripture* or the Church, was filled with *smoke;* that is, as regards the wicked, with darkness and ignorance; lest they should be enabled to understand *the secret things of Scripture*, the judgments of God, and the mysteries of the Church, which will be opened to the good." . . . "And none of the wicked were able to enter into the *Temple*, *i. e.*, into *the Sacred Scripture*, by any true understanding of its mysteries."

So Alexander De Hales; "The *Temple of God*, that is, the Church, is filled, as far as regards the perverse, with the blindness of ignorance; since they are unwilling to understand the truth of the *Sacred Scripture*. Whence, inasmuch as they are unwilling to see the truth of the *Sacred Scripture*, they will remain in their blindness; being blinded by the *smoke* of ignorance. Wherefore, although the Temple and the Divine mystery are open to the faithful and to the saints, they are nevertheless, in regard to the wicked, filled with the *smoke* of ignorance, and shut out from their view." . . . And again; "By the *Tabernacle of the testimony* may be understood the *Sacred Scripture*, because it contains the testimony; so that every word of truth within it is the house of God." So also the *Interlineal Gloss*—"The *Temple* was filled with *smoke*, i. e., *the Scrip-*

ture was filled with *smoke*, in respect to the wicked. Aquinas observes, "The Temple of God was opened in heaven, *i.e.*, the mystery of God is revealed, or that which had previously been hidden; which is sacred and venerable, because it virtually contains the worship of God; that which previously was as it were a Temple shut up, before Christ had opened those things in the Law which lay hidden under figures, by accomplishing human Redemption and opening the *Scriptures*."

"Though all things will then be open to the faithful," says the *Glossa Ordinaria* on this verse, "nevertheless they will be closed and obscure to the unbelieving."

"These plagues," says Durham,* "being against obstinate contemners of the light of the Word, now such a *spiritual smoke* of ignorance and hardness of heart was upon them, and possibly of darkness and contention in the Church, that through God's judgment on them they fretted under these plagues and perished; but repented not."

"Though every physical impediment be now removed," says Faber on this subject,† "and though the doors of the Temple be thrown wide open; yet through the moral impediment of a thick *intellectual smoke*, no man can enter into it. Even

* On the *Apocalypse*, chap. xv.

† *Sacred Calendar of Prophecy*, vol. iii., p. 248.

where the light of the Gospel shines the brightest, the adherent of the Roman Church is unable to discern its excellency. The Temple is open, but clouds and darkness bar up his approach, no less effectually than persecution itself."

Bullenger* indeed observes, that in the Church militant even the elect have only a partial knowledge of divine mysteries; for, as the Apostle says, We know only in part. "The majesty of God is in itself bright and clear; but the *smoke*, that is, the darkness of the human mind, prevents its being perceived."

It would be easy to add, from ancient and modern authors, interpretations to the same effect; and which, as you will perceive, are substantially the same with those of Swedenborg, who† regards the *smoke*, interpreted in an evil sense, as generally arising from pride of self-intelligence.

What then do these interpretations amount to? They amount to this: that in the latter days of the Church there will be a new opening of the Divine mysteries contained in Scripture; which the world, nay, the Church in general, will neither see nor understand, and which they will regard as all—*smoke;* when viewed in the light of tradition, reason, and learning.

* Not the Protestant, but the Roman Catholic Commentator of that name.

† See *Apocalypse Explained* in loc.

The cause of this state of religious consciousness is this; that the Church has fallen away from spiritual into natural light; so that no man is able to see, much less to enter into the Temple of God. Nothing is perceived but the *smoke* of self-contradiction, absurdity, incoherence, ignorance, superstition, mysticism, impossibility, and all the other caliginous atmospheres which prevent our modern critics, and men of science, from beholding the glory of God in the Temple of his written Word.

It is but inverting the order of things to say, that were the Scriptures destroyed, the Church would survive; that whatever may become of the Scriptures, the Church is indefectible. The Scriptures will never be destroyed, but by the destruction of spiritual truth. Shall we suppose that truth itself may fail, and yet the Church continue indefectible? What if Reviewers and Critics fancy that they are doing God service in their blind hostility to the principles we here maintain? We only say to them in reply—"Go ye, and learn what that meaneth—'*And the Temple was filled with smoke.*'"

TRANSITION OF CHURCHES.
INDEFECTIBILITY OF THE CHURCH.

"If there is one thing," says Mr. Max Müller,* "which a comparative study of religions places

* *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. i., Preface, p. 23.

in the clearest light, it is the inevitable decay to which every religion is exposed. It may seem almost like a truism, that no religion can continue to be what it was during the lifetime of its founder and its first apostles. Yet it is but seldom borne in mind, that without constant reformation, *i. e.*, without a constant return to its fountain-head, every religion, even the most perfect, nay the most perfect on account of its very perfection, more even than others, suffers from its contact with the world; as the purest air suffers from the mere fact of its being breathed."

This perpetual tendency to decline has already been illustrated in regard to the Four Ages of the world; and to the mode of apprehending, consequently of interpreting, Scripture, proper to each age. We now come to consider it more especially in regard to the Church; for even the Christian Church is not exempt from the universal tendency to deterioration.

"This know also," says the Apostle,* "that in the last days perilous times shall come." "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." The question is, in this case, what becomes of the Christian Church? Is it to follow the law of continuity, which we have already traced in the transition from one Dispen-

* 2 Tim. iii. 1, 13.

sation to another; or is it utterly to come to an end, to cease to be continued in any sense?

How fondly cherished is the phrase ἡ ἀεὶ ἐκκλησία! Has not our Lord said, "Lo! I am with you alway, even to the end of the world?" Words which are interpreted as ensuring the continuity of the Dispensation, are regarded as upon this ground ensuring the continuity of the Church; and as such, if there should be developments at all, they would be developments within the Church, and not developments of one Church into another. The doctrine of a future life gradually developed itself in the Jewish Church; and yet the Mosaic law remained the same, the Dispensation the same, the Jewish Church the same. At different periods in the Jewish Church there were different crises; as in the times of Elias, Ezra, and Daniel. So also in the Christian Church we read of Athanasius and Ambrose, of Savonarola, St. Bernard, Luther, and Calvin. But none of these individuals marked a transition from one Dispensation to another; nor were they the initiators of any New Church—an office which the Reformers especially disclaimed, although it was imputed to them by some of their opponents. In this case, so long as the Dispensation remained the same, the Church remained the same; and we might speak of the ἡ ἀεὶ ἐκκλησία as excluding all notion of change. And yet it is obvious, that when we use the term *Church* in this sense, we are speaking of a particular Church

which lasts as long as the age; or continues one and the same as long as the age continues one and the same, and no longer. The ἀεὶ in this case is that of the αἰῶν; of the Church of the age, not of the Church of all Ages.

The Universal Church, as the Church not of one age but of all ages, the ἡ ἀεὶ ἐκκλησία in the most Catholic sense, so far from excluding the idea of change or transition, involves in itself historically a series of changes or transitions from death to life, from old to new, from its first state down to its last.

It is well known that the Roman Catholic Church professes to be a continuation of the Jewish; and learned works have been written in that communion expressly to prove it. The argument used by Bellarmine is, that the Bridegroom never married but one Bride; this one Bride being of course the ἡ ἀεὶ ἐκκλησία:

"We deny,"* says he, "that Christ ever put away his spouse in order to take another. For Christ as man never had but one spouse, *i. e.*, the Christian Church, which He formed to Himself from out of His own pierced side; as formerly Adam took one wife, namely Eve, from out of his own side. The same Christ as God conjoined to Himself the Church in matrimony from the beginning of the world, nor did He ever put her away. For although Christ seems

* *Disputationes*, tom. ii., chap. xxiv.; *De Clericis*, p. 379.

to have put away the Synagogue; because at that time the Jews were without God, and because the blessed Paul, in his fourth chapter to the *Galatians*, explains the passage in *Genesis*—'Cast out the bondwoman and her son'—*Gen.* xxi., as referring to the Old Testament;—nevertheless, in truth Christ did not put away the Church of the Old Testament, but renovated and beautified it; and from a bondwoman made her free, and in this manner cast out the bondwoman, that is, the state of servitude: just as if any one should take to himself a bondwoman for a wife, and after some time should make her free. Wherefore the blessed Paul, in his Epistle to the *Romans* says; 'Hath God cast away His people? God forbid! For I also am an Israelite. God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew.' Therefore it was only a certain part of the obstinate Jews who withdrew from the unity of the true Synagogue; the rest remained *(reliqui manserunt)*, and by them* was continued the marriage of Christ with His Church."

It is in consequence of the preservation of this remnant that Bellarmine says†—"It cannot be shewn, that there was ever any utter defection of the Synagogue of the Jews down to the advent of Christ; and even at that time, the Jewish Synagogue

* See Cornelius à Lapide on *Romans* xi. 4.

† *Disputationes*, tom. ii., lib. iii., chap. xvi., p. 194. *De Ecclesia Militante.*

did not so much fall away, as rather undergo a change for the better."

Hence, on the words "when the Son of Man cometh shall He find faith on the earth," the same author observes—"That* the Lord is not speaking of faith simply; but of a certain eminent faith which would be found only in a few; and, in the last days, in the fewest possible. In this way it is explained by Jerome in his Dialogue against the Luciferians, and by Augustine in his Book on the Unity of the Church, chap. xiii. Or we may say with Theophylact; that the Lord speaks of faith absolutely, and means to say, that in the time of Antichrist the faithful will be but few; not that there will be none, nor that there will be so few as not to make a Church."

Suarez makes a similar remark:* "Christ," says he, "cannot so abandon His Church, as that it shall be utterly overcome (*Matt.* xvi. 18—24, 22). There will be many elect, therefore, who will not be overcome, and in whom the Church will remain." . . . . "And in this manner are Catholic writers to be piously understood, whenever they say that at that time (the time of Antichrist) there shall be a falling away from the faith throughout the whole world; or words to the like effect."

* *Ibid.*, p. 196.

† *Commentariorum ac Disputationum in tertiam partem;* D. Thomæ, tom. ii., p. 649.

Now it is universally acknowledged, that the elect are not the many but the few; the few being no other than those which constitute the *remnant*, and the remnant no other than those which constitute the Church. To know, therefore, what becomes of the Church in the days of general defection, we must know what becomes of the *remnant*.

Let us compare what has been said upon this subject in the *Arcana Cœlestia*, with the statements which we find in the writings of other eminent authors, Roman Catholic and Protestant.

According to the *Arcana*:* "The case with every Church is, that in process of time it decreases, and at last remains only amongst a few: these few, with whom it remained at the time of the flood, were called (by the collective name) *Noah*. That the true Church decreases and remains with a few, may appear from other Churches which in like manner have decreased: they who remain are in the Word called *remains* and a *remnant*, and are said to be left in the midst, or middle of the land; and as this is the case with the Church in general, so is it the case also with the Church in particular, or with every particular person. Unless *remains* or a *remnant* were preserved by the Lord in every particular person, he must needs perish eternally; inasmuch as spiritual and celestial life is in those remains. This

* Art. 468.

also is true in a general or universal sense; so that unless there was always a reserve of some with whom the true Church or a true faith remained, mankind must needs perish everlastingly; for, as is generally allowed, the city is saved, nay, sometimes a whole kingdom, because of a few."

We have seen how the Adamic Church was preserved in the Noachian by means of the *remnant;* how in like manner the Noachian was preserved in the Jewish; for there was a Church before the Jewish, in which were ordained things which were afterwards continued into the Jewish Church; and in this sense, as we read in the *Arcana,* "the Jewish Church was not any new Church, but was a resuscitation of the Ancient Church which had perished." The Jewish Church was *essentially* the same with the Noachian, the Noachian with the Adamic; and in this sense it was not as if it had never been before, or had its origin only in the time of Moses: it was *essentially* the ἡ ἀεὶ ἐκκλησία, the Church of all Ages, though shrouded from internal sight by an external covering. Had it consisted only of the external covering, it would never have contained within itself the Church of all Ages; the line of continuity would have been broken; in no sense could the Christian Church be said to be a continuation of the Church of the Jews, or of former ages; nor would the preser-

* *Arcana,* art. 4835.

vation of a Jewish *remnant* have been of the slightest use toward effecting the continuity of the Church.

In what sense neither the Jewish Church nor the Christian are said to be *new* churches, is thus explained in the *Arcana* :—

"The externals* of the Ancient or Noachian Church were all representative of the Lord, and of the celestial and spiritual things of His kingdom, that is, of love and charity and faith thence derived; consequently of such things as are of the Christian Church. Hence it is, that when the externals of the Ancient (Noachian) Church and also of the Jewish are unfolded, and as it were unswathed, the Christian Church is discovered. This was signified by the vail of the temple being rent in twain."

This principle of the oneness of the Church from the foundation of the world, though too often ignored, has nevertheless been frequently acknowledged. Upon this principle it is that many† have argued that altar, sacrifice, and priesthood in the Christian Church are a continuation of those in the Jewish; that when the Jewish Church was succeeded by the Christian, and a great company of priests became obedient to the faith, that in thus passing

* Art. 4772.

† *Sermons on Subjects of the Day*, by Dr. H. Newman.—Sermons 14 and 15. *Principle of continuity between the Jewish and Christian Churches.—The Christian Church a continuation of the Jewish*, p. 238, 217.

over from the Jewish to the Christian Church, they were among the means employed by the Divine Providence to preserve the continuity of the Church. "The sacred writers," we are told, "are frequent in speaking of a '*remnant*' as alone in inheriting the promises: the phenomenon of a remnant has been a sort of law of the Divine Dispensations toward man hitherto, and is declared, especially by St. Paul, to be such! 'God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew. Wot ye not what Scripture saith of Elias . . . . but what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men; and then the Apostle adds—Even so then at this present time also there is a *remnant*, according to the election of grace.' No word is more frequent in the prophets than this word *remnant*, as we must be very well aware."

Well, then; there was a remnant in the time of Elias, and that remnant was preserved for the purpose of continuing the Dispensation. There was a remnant in the time of the second Elias, and that remnant was preserved for the purpose of changing the Dispensation. In both cases the remnant is preserved for the purpose of perpetuating upon earth the Universal Church; and as the Jewish Church is said to be no new Church, and the Christian Church itself to be only a resuscitation of the old, it is evident, that in this sense a transition from the Jewish Church to the Christian is not a transi-

tion from an old Church to a new: both are essentially one and the same Church. This will enable us to understand the observations of Dr. Newman which follow:*—

"As then no one would say that the chosen people did not continue one and the same after the captivity in Babylon, though instead of Israelites they had become Jews; as the Church remained the same as before, though the nation was gradually changing; so when it changed altogether and became Gentile for Jewish, still there was no substitution of a new Church for an old: it was but a manifestation of the old law of the 'remnant,' by which many were called, and the few were chosen."

We may go farther: we may admit that as in this sense the Noachian, Jewish, and Christian were none of them new Churches, so neither is the New Jerusalem which descends from God out of heaven; for it is essentially one and the same with the Adamic or Most Ancient Church: it is only the ἡ ἀεὶ ἐκκλησία, the Church of all Ages divested of its envelopments, and arrived at a fuller development than it had primevally acquired.

But what then? Is there no sense whatever in which the Noachian, Jewish, Christian, and Apocalyptic can be called new or old? This does not at all follow.

* *Sermons on Subjects of the Day*, by Dr. H. Newman, etc., p. 220.

"The Church," says Cornelius à Lapide,* "is as it were one garment; whose anterior, or outermost and now worn-out part, was the *Old Church*, or the Synagogue with its Law of Moses: the posterior, or inner and more perfect part, was the *New Church*, and the Gospel of Christ."

In his *Enquiry into the Nature, Progress, and End of Prophecy*, Dr. Lee frequently speaks of the Christian Church as a New Church; and of the Babylonian Church in the latter days, the *Family Bible* observes, *Rev.* xxi. 2, that, "As this Christian Church, in its former corrupt state, answered to the sinful Jerusalem that was destroyed by the Chaldeans and Romans; so now, in its reformed and pure condition, it is styled *New*."

The reason for which the title *New* may be applied to the Christian Church upon earth, is thus assigned by Alcazar;†—

"That the name *New Jerusalem* might be most aptly given to the Church as soon as it was founded upon earth, is clear from the language of Scripture. For Paul makes use of the expression *new* to distinguish the spiritual man from the earthly and carnal; so that he calls the one 'the new man,' the other 'the old.' In like manner, therefore, the same most suitable expression is used to distinguish the

* *Galatians*, chap. i. 7.

† *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, xxi. 2. See *Romans* vi. 6; *Eph.* ii. 15; iv. 24; *Col.* iii. 9, 10.

spiritual Jerusalem from the earthly. To *come down from heaven* has the force of implying *above*, or *from above;* a mode of speaking which Christ the Lord sometimes made use of; and Paul also in his Epistle to the *Galatians*, by the same mode of speaking, distinguishes the New Jerusalem from the Old, that is, the Church from the Synagogue. Where it seems plain from the context, that the language is used concerning the Church militant. And in the *Apocalypse*, iii. 12, the name of the city *New Jerusalem* which comes down from heaven, is given in the way of laudation to the Church militant; as we have there observed."

We thus see in what sense the Christian Church was the substitution of a New Church for an Old; also in what sense there was no substitution but a continuation. The changes of *old* and *new* experienced by the Church of all Ages have never altered its essential nature; but have affected only its external relations; nevertheless how momentous these changes may be, we may read in a Sermon by Dr. Newman on *The Christian Church a Continuation of the Jewish.*

"Such changes,"* says Dr. Newman," whether gradual or not, do not interfere with the Church's being considered one and the same under them. How different is a human being in different stages

* *Sermons on Subjects of the Day*, p. 215.

of his existence! how different all his states here below from that body which shall be! yet the same body shall rise which dies, though it be made a spiritual body. It is no objection, then, rather it gives countenance, to the notion of the identity of the Jewish Church with the Christian, that it is so different from it; for the Jewish Church was at various eras very different from itself; and worms of the earth at length gain wings, yet are the same; and man dies in corruption, and rises incorrupt, yet without losing his original body."

The Church then may do the same; may die in corruption, and rise again incorrupt, and yet remain indefectibly one and the same Church; just as a man may put off his natural body and put on a spiritual body, and yet continue to be one and the same man; and if the natural body be called the old body, and the spiritual the new body, there is no difficulty in saying that the old Jewish Church died, and the new Christian Church was raised up; and yet that the Church continued all the while essentially and indefectibly one and the same Church.

Not only, however, may the death and resurrection of the individual man illustrate the changes experienced by the Church; but so also may the several stages of infancy, manhood, and old age, through which the individual passes. Thus, as observed by Albertus Magnus:—

"Like* as man has three different states in respect of age, viz., infancy, manhood, and old age; so the Church in the beginning was, as it were, in the state of infancy; afterwards, in a state of robust growth; and finally, it will be in a state of old age as it were, and of great debility. The first state, *infancy*, is developed by Luke in the *Acts of the Apostles;* the second, *manhood*, in the *Epistles* of Paul and in all the canonical writings; the third, *old age*, by John in the *Apocalypse*, as it was revealed to him by the Lord."

This period of the old age of the Church Albertus Magnus considers to be the same with that of the age of Antichrist; and the opinions of Cornelius à Lapide in his Commentary on the *Canticles*, and also of other Roman Catholic writers, are to the same effect. Now, then, we say with the Apostle—"that which is old is ready to vanish away;" but only in this sense, that there is a transition, a development, of the old into the new; and that such changes, whether gradual or not, do not in the least interfere with the Church being considered to be one and the same under them. "What has taken place in the Christian Church," says Dr. Newman, "is† of course no fulfilment at all of promises made to the Jewish, unless in some very true sense they

* See his *Works;* vol. ii. Prologue to the Apocalypse: p. 2.

† *Sermons on Subjects of the Day*, p. 223.

may be called one Church." On this principle, we who believe in the transition of the present or old Church and Dispensation and the introduction of a new Church and Dispensation, yet at the same time in the indefectibility of the Church universal; can cordially assent to that article in the ancient Creeds, which expresses a belief in "the existence* of one holy, catholic, and apostolic Church; which usage can only be founded in the doctrine that the Church was always to continue; for why otherwise should men profess their belief in the existence of the Church as an article of the faith?" We may, therefore, cordially say with Bishop Pearson,—"I am assured† that there was, hath been hitherto, and now is, and hereafter shall be as long as the sun and moon endure, a Church of Christ one and the same."

Accordingly, we read in the *True Christian Religion*, that‡ "The Lord provides that there shall *always be a Church upon earth* (ἡ ἀεὶ ἐκκλησία), where the Word may be read, and the Lord in consequence made known." So also in the *Arcana Cœlestia*,§ "The Church upon earth is the foundation of heaven; inasmuch as the influx of good and truth through the heavens from the Lord, ultimately

* Palmer's *Treatise on the Church of Christ;* vol. i., p. 9. Sec. Ed.

† Bishop Pearson On the *Creed*, art. *Holy Catholic Church.*

‡ Art. 270.

§ Art. 4060, 4423, 4489, 4868, 9276.

terminates in the goods and truths appertaining to the man of the Church; wherefore, when the man of the Church is in such a perverted state as no longer to admit the influx of good and truth, in this case the powers of the heavens are said to be moved. On this account it is *always provided of the Lord, that somewhat of a Church should remain;* and when an old Church perisheth, that a new one should be established."

We have now seen in what sense the Church is indefectible. The continuity, identity, and indefectibility of the Universal Church are ensured both in and by the *remnant.* "I consider, then," says* Dr. Newman, "that the word *remnant,* so constantly used in Scripture, is the token of the identity of the Church in the mind of her Divine Creator, before and after the coming of Christ." That is to say; however corrupt the Church may become, there will always be a part, however small—a *remnant* in which the Church of all Ages will be perpetuated, in a line of continuity from its first commencement.

It has sometimes been said that the promises of perpetuity to the Jewish Church were conditional; and the promises to the Christian Church unconditional. This may serve the purpose of a theory; but not of interpretation. The Seven Churches of Asia are commonly taken to typify the Catholic

* *Sermons on Subjects of the Day,* p. 220.

Church; and no one seems to deny that the promises to these Churches were conditional; and if the Jewish Church might be merged into the Christian, and yet, according to Bellarmine and others, the Church at that time continued to be indefectible, the same argument applies to the existing Catholic Church. We may admit that it is indefectible, and that it would continue to be indefectible even if merged into a New Church; for though the greater part should fall away, yet, if a remnant be preserved, that remnant is the Church. Renovated the Church may be by means of the remnant; but still it continues to be indefectibly one and the same Church; that Church which is built upon a rock, and against which the gates of Hell shall not prevail.

When, therefore, we proclaim the commencement of a New Church, it is no answer to us to say that the Church is indefectible; that it will ever continue one and the same; that as such the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. We admit all that; and yet, it may be, the same thing may take place in the future which has already taken place in the past, viz., that it is by the very means of a New Church that the indefectibility of the Church Universal is maintained, or is enabled to continue one and the same. The announcement of a New Church is in this case nothing more than the announcement of a resuscitation of the Old.

As we have seen in what sense the Church is *indefectible;* we proceed to shew in what sense the Church is *defectible.* The case is thus stated by Bishop Pearson:*—

"The Church," says he, "is not of such a nature as would necessarily, once begun, preserve itself for ever. Many thousand persons have fallen totally and finally from the faith professed, and so apostatized from the Church. Many particular Churches have been wholly lost; many candlesticks have been removed; neither is there any particular Church which hath any power to continue itself more or longer than others; and consequently if all particulars be defectible, the Universal Church must also be subject of itself unto the same defectibility."

"But though the Providence of God doth suffer many particular Churches to cease, yet the promise of the same God will never permit that all of them shall at once perish."

Now the Universal Church, as we have explained it, is the Church of all Ages, the ἡ ἀεὶ ἐκκλησία, which was in the beginning, and has descended through all ages down to the present time; as such it is not a mere collection of all the particular Churches at present existing; if it were, it would be subject to their defectibility. But we

* *On The Creed*, art. *Holy Catholic Church.*

have shewn that the Church Universal can never fall away. The consequence is, that Swedenborg never speaks of the defection or failure of the Universal Church. On the contrary*—"It is altogether requisite," says he, "that there should be a Church upon earth, without which the human race would perish; for otherwise it would be as when a man dies, when the lungs and heart cease to be moved; for which reason it is likewise provided of the Lord, that there should *always be a Church upon earth*, where the Lord is revealed by the Divine Truth which is from Him, which Divine Truth on our earth is the Word."

What then are the principles which constitute this Universal Church? We answer, The same principles upon which hang all the Law and the prophets; which are the essentials of the Church in heaven, and consequently of the Church upon earth. In the days of Antichrist, wherever these principles are found in life and activity, there is the *remnant*, whether within the Church or without it; gathered from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south.

It is indeed easy for any particular Church to appropriate to itself the essentials of the Universal Church, and then to maintain its own indefectibility

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, art. 9276, 2853. *Apocalypse Explained*, art. 665.

on the ground that the Catholic Church is indefectible. Thus Perrone observes:*

"For, according to what we have maintained, the Church was so instituted by Christ, that it might at all times provide for all men the means of obtaining to themselves salvation: it ought therefore at all times so to continue as to be recognized by all, and be constantly distinguishable from every sect. Now this the Church would not be, if at any time any part of it could fall away; for then it would no longer be identical: it would cease to be one, holy, catholic, and apostolic, such as its nature demands in accordance with the institution of Christ; nor would it any longer outwardly carry the notes of apostolicity by which it could be distinguished as the true Church. Men might consequently be deceived, when they regarded as the true Church, a society which in truth was only a sect or synagogue of Satan."

Let then Rome comment upon Rome. According to Bellarmine, it cannot be proved that at any time there was any utter defection of the Synagogue; that even at the Advent of our Lord himself, the Synagogue did not so much fall away as rather was changed for the better. So then the Church may pass through all the changes of the Jewish Synagogue, from death to life, from old to new; and yet

* *Tract. De Loc. Theol.*, part i., chap. 4. *De Ecclesiæ Dotibus.*

be considered never to have lost her identity, never to have fallen away, but on the contrary to have undergone a change for the better.

Shall we refuse to the Church of Rome, upon such grounds, her claim to indefectibility? If the Church of Rome be indefectible on the same ground as the Church of all Ages; if it can pass through all the phases of the Church Universal, from its first commencement down to the first era of Christianity, and yet not be considered to have lost her identity, or to have fallen away; we have no controversy with any Church which may claim indefectibility on these grounds.

In what sense, then, are we to understand defectibility in regard to the Church? Is it a defection of the Church, or a defection from the Church? For, speaking of the time of Antichrist, the Apostle says, 2 *Thess.* ii. 3, "That day shall not come, except there come a falling away first." The question is thus answered by Suarez:*

"For such a departure there may be from the Roman Pontiff and the Catholic Church, whatever be the countries or people in which it may take place; and it may be so called as by antonomasia; because it is *the Church* perhaps which will for the greatest part fall away—*quia fortasse maxima ex parte Ecclesia deficiet.*"

* *Comment. and Disput. In tertiam partem D. Thomæ.* Tom. ii., *Disput.* 56, sec. i., p. 662.

"For, at the time at which Antichrist will reign, not only will *the Church* be unable to be propagated, or the preaching of the Gospel to be carried into new countries; but rather, even where the Church will be, it (*i. e., the Church*) will for the greatest part fall away; and the faithful who shall persevere will scarcely be able to make any public profession of religious worship, much less will they be sent to convert new provinces."*

The faithful are the remnant. It is *the Church*, then, which will for the greatest part fall away; and it is only by a figure of speech that it is said the falling away is to be from the Church.

Some of the early Christians supposed that the

* That it is the Catholic faith itself which in the time of Antichrist undergoes an eclipse, is evidently understood by Nicolas De Lyra; for, speaking of the Church, he says on Psalm xxi.—"*Videbitur a Deo derelinqui;*" and that it is in the person of the Church that it is said, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" So again, on Psalm ci.—speaking of the time of Antichrist—"*tanta erit tribulatio quod videbitur aliquibus de Ecclesia, quod fides Catholica debeat totaliter deficere.* Therefore it is added in the person of the Church, 'Oh, my God! call me not away in the midst of my days;' by taking me away utterly from out of this present life. '*In the midst of my days*,' that is, before the end of the world; which is the time appointed for the duration of the Church militant; according to the words of the Saviour; 'Lo! I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.'"

We have already seen, that by the *end of the world* is meant the end of the Age or Dispensation.

Apostle was alluding to a defection from the Roman Government; but Estius here observes, that—"In the Sacred Scriptures the word *apostasy* intimates a spiritual defection, such as is that from faith and religion; rather than a political defection, such as is that from an earthly government, and which might take place without being an act of sin." Hence, when the Apostle speaks of the days of Antichrist as days of universal defection, and of Antichrist as sitting in the Temple of God, the prediction is generally interpreted in reference to the state of the Church. Thus upon this subject Augustine observes—that* as many heretics had already gone out of the Church; so in the last days all those will go out of the Church who belong not to Christ but to Antichrist. One thing, however, is certain, that Antichrist does not go out of the Church; but stays in the Church, and sits in the Temple of God. Hence Œcumenius observes, that the Apostle does not say that "Antichrist is to sit in the temple of Jerusalem, but in the churches of God;" and Aquinas, that when it is said, "He shall sit in the temple of God," it means "in the Church, because many who are of the Church will receive him." Calvin indeed says; "Paul is here predicting a certain general defection of the visible Church; and when it is said that the Man of sin sitteth in the temple

* *De Civitate Dei*, lib. xx., cap. xix.

of God, I therefore confess the temple of God to be that in which the Pope is ruler." On the other hand, it is observed by Bellarmine—"And* indeed much more easily can we prove the Lutherans to be those who have fallen away, than they can prove the Catholics to have fallen away; since they themselves cannot deny, that they have fallen away from the Church in which they were before."

Without entering into the question with regard to those in the Church specifically who are said to have fallen away, whether Roman Catholic, Protestant, or Greek Churches; we may revert to the interpretation of Origen, who says; that as Christ is the Truth, so Antichrist is that which is against the Truth; thus that Antichrist signifies false doctrine; and hence that to *sit in the temple of God* signifies false doctrine taught in the Church *ex cathedra*, or by authority.

How this state of things is ultimately brought about in the Church, is thus described in the *Apocalypse Revealed;*—

"Every Church,† at its beginning, respects goods of life in the first place, and truths of doctrine in the second; but, as the Church declines, it begins to respect truths of doctrine in the first place, and goods of life in the second; and at length, in the

* Disput. *De Romano Pontifice*, tom. i., lib. ii., cap. iii., p. 854.

† Art. 82, 85. Also *Arcana Cœlestia*, 4683.

end, it respects faith alone; and then it not only separates the goods of charity from faith, but also omits them. Hence, then, it may appear, that by these words, 'thou hast left thy first love,' is signified that they do not esteem good of life in the first place; which nevertheless is, and has been, done in the beginning of every Church. . . . If truths of doctrine are respected primarily or in the first place, they may indeed be known, but not interiorly seen, and loved from spiritual affection; *therefore they successively perish.* For to see truths from their own light, is to see them from man's interior mind, which is called the spiritual mind; and this mind is opened by charity; and when it is open, light and the affection of understanding truths flow in out of heaven from the Lord: hence arises illustration. The man who is in this illustration, acknowledges truths as soon as he reads or hears them; but it is not so with the man whose spiritual mind is not opened, who is one that is not principled in the goods of charity, howsoever he may be principled in the truths of doctrine."

We may thus see how the organization of the Church may remain the same, the traditions the same, the canonical Scriptures the same, the external faith the same, the authority the same, thus how the Church may continue to be one and the same Church; while at the same time its candlestick is removed. "The Catholic and Roman

Church," says Calmet, on 2 *Thess.* ii., "in spite of her losses and the apostasy of a great number of her children, is always the same. She has the same faith, the same morality, the same Scriptures, the same chiefs. In a word, she subsists, and will continue to subsist to the end of the world." The same notes of identity the Jewish Church claimed for itself in the time of our Lord:* "they were threatened with the evils which have befallen them, supposing they did *not* keep their law; whereas in the event the punishment has come upon them, apparently *for keeping* it; because they would not change the Law for the Gospel, *therefore* have they been scattered through the nations." They did not see how the Christian Church was the continuation or development of the Jewish; or how the Gospel was a continuation or development of the Law.

"The Bible," says a modern critic,† "it is supposed, is based upon an organic coherence, according to which the Old Covenant bears the same relation to the New, as the embryonic germ to the perfect development; and on these or similar principles, the typical explanation is still defended by some writers;" but, says the same writer, . . . "it must be absolutely denied that the authors of the Old Testament, and especially of the Pentateuch, regarded their laws

* *Sermons bearing on Subjects of the Day*, p. 222.

† *Historical and Critical Commentary on the Old Testament*, by Dr. Kalisch: *Leviticus*, part i., p. 118.

and institutions as the transitory germ of some higher form to be unfolded in the lapse of ages, or as parts of a preparatory economy to be ultimately merged in some more perfect system; on the contrary, they looked upon them as final and immutable for all times, because embodying the sum of all truth and Divine Wisdom." It was in this sense, that they believed the identity of the Jewish Church would be continued to the end of the world; and it is in the same sense, that we are called upon to believe in the identity and continuity of the existing Catholic Church.

How the transition from the old to the new state of things was to be effected, so that the Christian Church should continue to be one and the same with the Jewish; has been a matter of controversy from the beginning of the Christian era down to the present time. If converts, while adopting the new, adhered also to the old state of things, they were reproached as Judaizers; if they adhered only to the new, they were reproached as separatists and sectarians; the consequence is, that the transition from the old to the new gave rise to the same doubts, difficulties, and embarrassments, which have originated in the present day under similar circumstances.

In order to prove the continuity of the Church, and that this continuity is interrupted by an act of separation; it has been maintained, that in passing from the old to the new state of things, the early

Christians adhered to the old as long as it existed. Thus Dr. Dollinger observes on that passage in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*—"Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach." —"It* is a mistake to affirm, as has often been done of late, that the author of the Epistle required an entire separation from the Jewish religion. He would not have done that incidentally in a couple of passing words, but have explained his grounds at length. As long as the Temple stood, no Jewish Christian was required to abjure the Levitical worship."

What then is the meaning of the words—"Let us go forth out of the camp bearing his reproach?" The meaning is thus given by Roman Catholic and Protestant writers:—

Aquinas observes, that "*to go forth from out of the camp*," signifies, among other things, "to go forth from the observance of legal ceremonies, and to renounce them at the coming of the truth:" Cornelius à Lapide, that among other things it means, the going forth from out of the camp of Judaïsm: Nicolas de Lyra, that it means to go forth from out of the observances of the Jewish Law: Calmet, that it means—"Let us abandon the useless ceremonies of the Law; let us leave the Jews hardened in their infidelity; let us glory in

* *First Age of Christianity and of the Church*, vol. i., p. 120.

being chased from their Synagogues, and excommunicated from their Church; let us esteem ourselves happy in having a part in the sufferings and humiliations of our Saviour." Calmet refers to Theodoret, Zegerius, Tirinus and others, in confirmation of this meaning, which is also included in the interpretations of the *Glossa Ordinaria.*

Protestant Commentators follow the same method of interpretation. Indeed Calvin's interpretation is virtually the same with that of Calmet.

Bengel observes on the words, "*Let us go forth out of the camp,*" that the *camp* here signifies "Judaism:" Dr. Wells, that the *camp* means "the Jewish Church and service:" Dr. Whitby, that it means "the terrestrial Jerusalem, the Jewish Church and service:" Dr. Hammond, that the Apostle means—"Let us therefore leave the Judaical service, the Mosaic Law, though many afflictions threaten us for so doing:" Dr. Burton, "Let us no longer follow the Jewish law:" Prebendary Pyle, that "Christ our great sacrifice was for our redemption crucified without the gates of Jerusalem, and accordingly none can partake of the blessings of His sacrifice and religion, till they come entirely off from the Jewish ceremonies, and become true Christians. Let us therefore leave the Jewish Camp, *i. e.*, the Jewish ceremonial religion, and entirely embrace His more excellent dispensation. Let us carry His cross, and after His example patiently suffer

the reproaches and persecutions of our adversaries."*

Such are the interpretations of the great body of ancient and modern Commentators; and, whatever may be thought of them, it is certain that none of these interpreters believed that the Apostle was abandoning the principle of the continuity of the Church, when, at the end of the Dispensation or the consummation of the Age, he was exhorting them to come out of the Old Church and to enter into the New.

Let us, however, consider this question apart from interpretation, and look to historical fact. Did the transition from the Jewish to the Christian Church, from the old to the new state of things, involve an act of secession, while yet the continuity of the Church was considered to be unbroken? Dean Milman, in his *History of Christianity*, thus furnishes an answer to this question;†—

"The Christian Church was almost universally formed by a secession from a Jewish Synagogue. Some Synagogues may have become altogether Christian; but, in general, a certain part of an existing community of Jews and Gentile proselytes

* Owen, Poole, Slade, Adam Clarke, Wesley, and others take a similar view of the subject: and Cocceius and Vitringa make use of this and similar texts for the purpose of justifying separation from the Church of Rome.

† Vol. ii., pp. 65, 69.

incorporated themselves into a new society, and met for the purpose of divine worship in some private chamber,—sometimes, perhaps, in a public place, as rather later, during the times of persecution, in a cemetery. The first of these may have answered to a Synagogue, the latter to an unwalled proseucha."

Christians—"in their origin were almost universally a community, formed, as it were, round an individual. The Apostle, or primitive teacher, was installed at once in the office of chief religious functionary; and the chief religious functionary is the natural head of a purely religious community. Oral instruction, as it was the first, so it must have continued to be the living, conservative, and expansive principle of the community. It was anterior to the existence of any book, the inspired record and supreme authority of the faith. As long as this teacher remained in the city, or as often as he returned, he would be recognized as the legitimate head of the society. But not only the Apostle, in general the primitive teacher likewise, was a missionary, travelling incessantly into distant regions for the general dissemination of Christianity, rather than residing at one spot to organize a local community."

We thus see what are the changes which are regarded as consistent with the identity, continuity, and indefectibility of the Church of all Ages—the

ἡ ἀεὶ ἐκκλησία. The Church may grow old, may die of corruption, may be preserved in a remnant; that remnant may secede from the Church, may form a new society, may institute lay teachers, may renounce the former services of the Church, may introduce a new liturgy, may assume to itself the name of a New Church—all which states the Church, in its transition from Jewish to Christian, did actually pass through; and yet remained one and the same Church, in other words, identical and indefectible; upon the principle, that the identity of the Church is no more altered by these changes than the identity of a man who dies and rises again.

Well, then, we may express our belief in the indefectibility of the Church, in the very language of the Roman Catholics:

"The* Church cannot fail for any, even the shortest, period of time; for then Christ and his Spirit would, for a period of time, have departed from it—a proposition which cannot be imagined; for He has said, that He and the Spirit of Truth shall abide with his Church for ever."

But it is added—"If we could suppose this interruption, how could we imagine a rejunction?" I answer, we cannot suppose it: the Church of all Ages cannot cease even for the smallest period of

* Klee's *Treatise on the Church;* art. *Indefectibility.*

time; for if it did, earth would be separated from heaven, and mankind would perish. It is not the Universal Church that perishes at the end of a dispensation, but the outward and corruptible form which it had assumed; and before this perishes, another form is provided. Hence, when it is asked how, supposing the present dispensation to close, the end of the present Church could be connected with the beginning of another; the past with the present or future;—"By another coming of Christ? by a new mission to the Apostles? by another descent of the Holy Ghost?" We answer; Look to what your own writers have said concerning this very period, viz., the times of Antichrist. At that very time, it is stated—"The Temple of God is opened in heaven," *i.e.*, says Cardinal Hugo—"The *mysteries of God* are made manifest and revealed in the Church; which is called heaven as having the luminaries of doctrine."

"The *Scripture* likewise is called heaven—in which the Temple was shut up, so long as *the Book* lay sealed under figures and obscurities; but is opened, when at the coming of the truth the shadow withdraws; just as night withdraws at the coming of the morning."*—But

When the mysteries of God are thus said to be

* So Dionysius Carthusianus, Gagnæus, etc., upon the *Apocalypse.*

made manifest to the Church, where, in the time of Antichrist, is the Church to be found? We have already seen that, according to Catholic writers, the Church is to be found only in the *remnant*—the remnant at the consummation of the age; in virtue of which the Lord is present with the Church down to the end of the one dispensation and the beginning of the other. Is the Temple of God opened to the remnant in order to be immediately closed? What became of the remnant when the Jewish Church passed away? We know that it became the body of Christ, in which was realized the presence of His Spirit: it was in fine the rudiment of a new external form of the Universal Church, in which the envelopments of the former Church were partially removed, and spiritual truth in the same proportion began to be more freely developed.

When, therefore, it is said at the end of one Church and the beginning of another, that the Church is the divinely appointed witness and teacher of the oracles of God; the question arises, What Church? The Church of the many, or the Church of the few? The Church of the defection, or the Church of the remnant? "The visible Church," says a modern writer,* speaking of the Jews, "having been ever regarded as co-existent

* Hinds' *History of the Rise and Early Progress of Christianity*, vol. i., p. 115.

with, and inseparable from, the Dispensation itself; the total removal of the former was the sign and pledge that the latter was taken away." The sign and pledge, then, of the end of the Dispensation, was the dissolution of the Temple; and this is true, whether the Temple be regarded as the Scriptures, or as the Church, or as both together; and how the process of dissolution is going on, we have already seen. But as in the case of the Jews, there were those who were slow of heart to believe in the end of the Dispensation; so it is now with regard to Christians; and hence we may say of them what has been said of the Jews, before the destruction of the Temple—"Until this event, the slow believing Jew might have had some plea for asserting that in Judah alone was God known, and that Jerusalem was still the place where men ought to worship; but the prophetic finger which charactered its downfall, wrote a language which was well understood to be, 'The kingdom is departed from thee.'"

One thing is certain, that if some precautions had not been taken by the Apostles in organizing a New Church before the dissolution of the Old, the sudden termination of the Jewish Economy must have taken the Christians by surprise; the old Church would have been dissolved before a new one could have been provided; and the result must have been a large amount of embarrassment and confusion; to say nothing of an apparent interrup-

tion of the continuity of the Church. Any corresponding sudden dissolution of the present Christian Economy is impossible. The modern Temple does not consist of mere stones and mortar; but of forms of thought created by interpretations of Scripture. Before these interpretations and the corresponding forms of thought come to an end, the new must be supplied which are to take the place of the old. A constructive process must be ready to take the place of the destructive. Accordingly our Lord has said, "That this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, and then shall the end come." The truth must first be made known to the existing Church or Churches, and these must have the full opportunity of receiving or rejecting it. This rejection or reception is the same with that process of *Judgment* called by theologians the *Judgment of discrimination;* because it classifies men according to their reception or rejection of the Truth. The process by which, in the spirit of free enquiry, this was effected at the end of the Jewish dispensation, is described in the same language which is used at this very day; "We desire to hear of thee," said the Jews of Rome to the Apostle, "what thou thinkest; for as concerning this sect we know that it is everywhere spoken against." . . . "This they say," as Cornelius à Lapide observes, "in order to prepossess and prevail over the mind of Paul, and avert him from preaching Christ. As

much as to say, You, O Paul! appear to follow privately the sect of Christ, and to preach Him; but you seem to be deceived; for everywhere the wise men among whom we are living, and we ourselves, also speak against Him. Submit your own judgment, then, to them and to us; lay aside your convictions and inclinations in favour of Christ; and go on with us to observe the law of Moses, and the religion sanctioned by him."

You acknowledge, they might have said to him, the same Scriptures as we do: the very Christ in whom you profess to believe, attended our Synagogue, our Temple, and its services. Your interpretations, however, can be of no authority with us; they are those of private individuals—a small number of ignorant fishermen split up among themselves into different sects; they are not those of the Sanhedrim: their origin was only of yesterday, while our traditions are clothed with the sanctity of more than a thousand years. How say you that our Dispensation is come to an end; when the very Book in which you profess to believe, declares that it shall last to the end of the world; and when our Temple, instead of presenting signs of dissolution, has been restored to all its former magnificence?

Such was the collision of the old with the new state of things, in the minds of those who adhered to the old; but the transition from the old to the new occasioned serious embarrassments even among

those who adhered to the new; for long before the destruction of the Temple, it was a question how far the old had ceased and the new was to be adopted; where and when the old had terminated; where and when the new began. If converts adhered to the old state of things, they were reproached as Judaizers; if they adhered to the new, they were reproached as presumptuous separatists and sectarians.

"Although the Hebrew Christians," says a recent writer,* "continued to observe the Law, their adoption of Christianity must powerfully have affected the strength of their allegiance to it. The displacement of the Temple sacrifice from its pre-eminence as the highest act of worship; the misgiving which this must have implied as to its further efficacy or meaning; and the haze of difficulty and confusion which must have been thrown upon many of the Jewish ordinances, must needs have paralysed all missionary effort in which those questions were involved. A perplexed man may hold fast his own belief: he will never impart it to another."

Take the case of the perplexity of the very Apostles Peter and Paul upon this subject.

"Peter,† though more particularly the Apostle

* Bishop Shirley's *Account of the Church in the Apostolic Age*, p. 35.

† *Works* of Dr. Conyers Middleton, vol. ii., p. 284; see the whole Article.

of the Jews, was clearly convinced, that the ceremonies of the Law were superseded and abolished by the Dispensation of the Gospel. For on all occasions, we find him strongly asserting this doctrine, and declaring, that the yoke of Moses ought not to be imposed on the necks of Christians; yet, with all this conviction, it is equally manifest, that through fear of the Jews, he was induced to change his conduct, dissemble his opinion, and join himself to those zealots of the Law, who required the observance of its rites, as necessary to all."

"Paul, on the other hand, the Apostle of the Gentiles, and by that character the more engaged to vindicate their liberty, knowing Peter's sentiments on this question to be the same with his own, was so scandalized at his dissimulation, that he could not abstain from reproaching him severely for it in public; yet, when it came afterwards to his own turn to be alarmed with an apprehension of danger from the same quarter, he was content to comply and dissemble too; and, in order to pacify the Jews, affected a zeal for their legal rites and observances, by the advice of James, who then presided in the Church of Jerusalem. Paul, says Chrysostom, was various both in his words and actions; at one time he complied with the ceremonies of the Law; at another he contemned them; at one time he sacrificed and shaved his head; at another he denounced anathemas against all who did so; at one time

he circumcised, at another rejected all circumcision."

The collision between the old and the new state of things, or the question how far it was expedient that the old should be superseded by the new, was referred to a general Council, which, according to a recent writer, "shared* to the full the heat and vehemence of debate; and whose final decree bears visible marks of the conflict of individual opinions, and of that spirit of compromise which we are wont to regard as one of the surest marks of the infirmity of human nature."

Porphyry† took occasion to charge both the Apostles, in their dispute upon this subject, with levity, inconstancy, and weakness of mind. Jerome affirms that the whole quarrel was an act of dissimulation on both sides; for otherwise how could Paul condemn in Peter that of which he himself was guilty. St. Augustine replies, that this is defending the Apostle on the ground of excusing his insincerity, and in reality practising a lie. He allows Peter to have been blameable, not for continuing with his countrymen to observe the traditions of their ancestors, which he might have done both innocently and consistently; but for obliging the Gentiles also to observe them in the same manner. To this view of

* Bishop Shirley's *Account of the Church in the Apostolic Age*, p. 56.

† See the article in Dr. Middleton's *Works* above mentioned.

the subject Jerome replies, "by treating it as a mere heresy, the same for which Cerinthus and Ebion had been condemned by the Church."

Even to this day it is said—"Nearly* all theologians have laboured in vain in their attempt to explain the subject (or decree of the Council); and seem not so much to have solved the difficulties contained in it, as rather to have evaded them."

We thus see the difficulty and confusion which arose from the transition, in individual minds, from the old dispensation to the new; how this transition gave rise to questions of expediency; and expediency to alleged compromise and dissimulation. The cause of these embarrassments was the opposition between the old and the new; and yet that opposition was not between the old and the new as taught in the Word of God, but as interpreted by the minds of men. What in the course of Divine Providence was only a process of development, was to the old Jewish mind a process of antagonism. Certainly, new wine cannot be put into old bottles; but the old bottles were not the statutes and judgments of the Jewish Law as interpreted by the new Christian Church, but as interpreted by the old Jewish Church. The old bottles of that day contained the mind of the Church, not the mind of Christ; they were simply externals alienated from things internal. And it is

* See Bishop Barrington's *Works*, vol. ii., p. 268.

upon the same principle that, in the present day, Scripture is interpreted; the consequence is, that the old bottles burst, being incapable of containing either the truths which relate to natural science, or those which relate to spiritual life; history, prophecy, statutes, judgments, ordinances, miracles, visions, revelations, are, by the critic, regarded as all so many old bottles bursting one after another, almost at the first glance of inspection.

But, as in the time of the Jews, so it is now—the old bottles are not the Old Testament, but the old forms of thought or of interpretation constituting the Church: these in many instances cannot be reconciled with the new, any more than the Jewish mind could be reconciled with the Christian; and yet the Old Testament survived the old Jewish interpretation, and remains as sacred to the Christian now as it was then to the Jew; while, nevertheless, the old Scriptures cannot, for the most part, in the merely literal sense, be reconciled with genuine spiritual truth, any more than they can be reconciled with the natural truths of science. There is the same difficulty in the one case as in the other.

The same externality which characterized the Jewish worship, characterized the Jewish notions of the moral attributes of God. If *sacrifices*, for instance, were an ordinance of worship; it was because God was assumed to be *angry*, and required to be thus *pacified*, and to be *reconciled* to His

creatures. The same external notions of enmity, wrath, pacification, and reconciliation which prevailed in Jewish theology, have been transferred to the Christian; and laid the foundation of many a doctrine of the Atonement. Appearances of truth have thus been mistaken for genuine truth; and the dogmas founded upon them are among the old bottles, into which the new wine of spiritual truth cannot be infused without their disruption.

The case is different with regard to the language of Scripture itself; for this language is common both to the old and the new dispensation. The literal sense of Scripture containing the spiritual is the Temple, and consists for the most part of mere appearances of Truth. We cannot destroy these appearances without destroying the Temple, nay, even without destroying the human mind itself; for essential Divine truth no created being is capable of apprehending, much less of receiving. We may, however, resolve appearances of truth into truths more and more spiritual, thus also more nearly approximating to those which are genuine. This is not destroying the Temple, but entering into the inner chambers. Hence we may adopt the language of Scripture used under the old dispensation, and say that *God is pacified;* yet, under the new dispensation, we interpret the expression in a higher sense; we pass out of the lower into the higher, and in this sense we say that *God is not pacified.* Here,

then, in the transition from the old to the new forms of thought, there is antagonism; and yet the same expressions are common to both. Just as in the case of ritual, the ritual may be abolished, but the meaning retained; so, in the case of doctrine, the external and merely natural and sensuous idea may be abolished, and the spiritual retained. The consequence is, that, in the transition from the old to the new, both ritual and doctrine undergo corresponding changes, and give rise to the same changes in regard to doctrine of which the Jews complained in regard to ritual. In both cases it is said—"This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words . . . . for we have heard him say that Jesus of Nazareth shall change the *customs* (Christians say the *doctrines*) which Moses delivered to us."

"'Thou teachest the Jews in Asia to forsake the Mosaic law,' *i. e.*, says Dr. Hammond,* to depart from the Mosaical observances, circumcision, etc. . . . . And to this the Apostle seems to exhort the Hebrew believers (Heb. xiii. 13), 'Let us therefore come forth to Christ without the camp,' *i. e.*, make *an express separation* from the unbelieving Jews; bearing Christ's reproach; *i. e.*, although we be persecuted by them for doing so." The brethren in Jerusalem had been informed that Paul had inculcated apostacy (for that is the word used) from the

* *Annotations on* 2 *Thess.* ii. 3.

Mosaic law. And although it is believed by some that the Apostle never openly did so, it is certain that he taught that which in the minds of many in that day amounted to the same thing: indeed the passage in the Hebrews is, to this hour, regarded as directly inculcating a separation from the Jewish Church—which is precisely what the brethren in Jerusalem had stated.

Commentators are, even now, in the same difficulties which perplexed the early Christians. At the present time, indeed, the Mosaic ritual has been regarded as abolished; but many doctrines connected with it have been allowed to remain; and the consequence is, that, in using Scriptural language, and substituting the spiritual sense for the merely natural, there is the same charge of compromise, dissimulation, and innovation, which, as we have seen, was brought against the Apostles.

Old and new dispensations imply old and new forms of thought; and yet we retain the old language of the Old Testament to express the new thoughts of the New Testament. Altar, sacrifice, priesthood, redemption, atonement, were terms used alike by Jew and Christian; but the Christian gave to them a sense which the Jew could not understand; and yet the sense was not new, but was no other than that which had prevailed in the Noachian Church.

The Apocalypse, which is a description of the

states of the Christian Church, is written in terms which belong to the Temple services; hence we read of the Temple and Tabernacle, the ark of the covenant, the altar of incense, the candlestick, vials, and priesthood. Hence, also, it has been asserted by some, that there is actually a ritual in heaven, of which the ritual in the Mosaic Law and that of the Christian Church upon earth is a continuation. But we have seen, that in the Adamic Church there was no ritual; nor was there any Temple; and yet it was in possession of the essential truths of which the Temple and its services were afterwards the shadow. It might as truly have been said of the Adamic Church as it is of the New Jerusalem—"I saw no Temple therein." In the Adamic Church, the angelic heavens were the Temple; in the New Jerusalem, the Lord God Almighty, even the Lamb, is The Temple—Divine Truth in the light of the glorified Humanity, which is the form of God. It was the Temple and its services which provided the language in which to speak of Divine and heavenly things; without these representations there would have been no means of conveying to us, in our present state, celestial truth: there would have been only unspeakable words for unspeakable things. Hence the observation in the *Apocalypse Explained*:—

"The* reason why *heaven* was represented before

* Art. 391.

John by an *altar*, is, because the whole Word was written by representatives, and by such representatives as existed with the sons of Israel. Wherefore, in order that the Word may be like to itself in both Testaments, similar things were seen by John and were recorded in this Book; such as the altar of incense, the incense itself with the censers, likewise the tabernacle, the ark, and other things of a like nature. But at this day such things never appear to any angel; nor to any man whose sight is opened into heaven. The reason of which is; because sacrifices were unknown to the ancients, and were altogether abolished after the advent of the Lord. For sacrifices were begun by Eber; and were afterwards continued with his posterity who were called Hebrews; and were tolerated with the children of Israel who were descended from Eber, especially for this reason; that the worship itself which is begun and rooted in the mind, is not abolished by the Lord; but is bent to signify what is holy appertaining to religion."

In conclusion:

In the Order of Ages from the period of the Fall to the birth of Christianity, we have seen that there has been a perpetual descent. In the Order of Ages from the Christian Church to the New Jerusalem, there is to be a corresponding ascent; that is to say, a retracing of steps along the line of descent, in such a direction as to bring us back to the restitu-

tion of all things; that is to say, a restoration of the Church to its primitive state. If the order of descent was from the Adamic Church to the Noachian, from the Noachian to the Jewish; it is obvious that the Church, in its ascent toward the primeval, passes through the Noachian. Now the Noachian Church was distinguished, as we have seen, for cultivating the Science of Correspondence; and this was the real ground of the resuscitation of this Science by the early Christian writers: the Church was thus only retracing its steps back to the primeval ages, and thus opening the old wells of primitive wisdom. Hence, as observed in the *Arcana*,* the internals of the Christian Church were altogether similar to the internals of the Noachian; they differed only in externals. "The internal things of the Ancient Church were all things relating to charity, and to faith grounded in charity, all humiliation, all adoration of the Lord from a principle of charity, all good affection toward the neighbour, and other things of a like nature. The externals of that Church were sacrifices, libations, and several other things; all which by representation had relation to the Lord, and regarded Him. The difference between the Ancient Church and the Christian was only in externals. The Ancient Church did not differ in the least from

* Art. 1083.

the Christian Church as to internals, but only as to externals; for the worship of the Lord from a principle of charity cannot vary, whatever variation may be made in things external."

If however we say, that, as there was a perpetual descent from the Fall to the Christian era, so there is to be a corresponding ascent from the Jewish Church to the Church of the Future; how shall we reconcile this statement with the *decline* of the Christian Church? The answer is; that in the line of descent pertaining to former dispensations, the Church was perpetuated in and by the *remnant;* but the remnant then put on a lower form of religious consciousness than that of the original Church of which it was the *remains.* In the case of the Christian Church, the religious consciousness of the remnant will develope itself into a higher form. This was the case in the transition from the Jewish to the present Dispensation; and this will be the case in the transition from the present to the primeval. The Apostolic Church was interior to the Jewish; the New Jerusalem will be interior to the Apostolic. Nay further: this Church of the Future will not be a mere restoration of the Church of the past: it will indeed be the same essentially with the Adamic Church, but it will be that Church in a state of fuller development.

For the Adamic Church worshipped an invisible God, who was made visible through the medium of

an Angel; the Church of the Future will worship a visible God—visible not through the medium of an angel, but through the medium of the Divine Humanity. Hence spiritual illumination, derived *à priori* from open intercourse with celestial angels, is not now requisite; as indeed, for mankind in general as they now are, it is no longer possible. The natural mind of man is at this day spiritually enlightened by means of the outwardly written Word; in which spiritual thoughts are communicated to man through the medium of language comprehensible to the natural mind. The Spirit of the Lord is in the Scriptures; because the Lord fulfilled the Scriptures, and thus glorified His Humanity. It is this glorified Humanity which is called *The Lamb;* and the marriage of the Church with the Lamb is come, when the Church is united with the Lord's glorified Humanity; which can be no longer effected by beginning with open intercourse with angels, though it may end in that intercourse, as in the primeval dispensation. Union with the Lord's glorified Humanity implies a fuller development of the natural degree of the human mind than had been attained even in the original state of Paradise; and, as subsidiary to this development, modern Science offers important aid. Indeed this is its real place in the Series and Order of Ages. It lays a broad and strong foundation in the natural or external mind; but the foun-

dation must be built upon; or it ceases to be a foundation.

We have already seen, that, in the Order of Ages there is, notwithstanding intermediate declensions, a real progression from the Adamic Church to the Church of the New Jerusalem—a progression which commenced with Christianity. As the marriage of the Lamb with the Church of the New Jerusalem is a fuller development of the marriage union of the Lord with the Adamic Church; so, it cannot be said to be a mere continuation of the union between Christ and the Synagogue, as Bellarmine intimates;* for the Jewish Church knew nothing of the principles of marriage, nay, it was not even a Church, but only the representative of a Church; and, as being only the representative of a Church, it was not a wife, but only the representative of a wife. The marriage union, therefore, in this case, was not real, but only represented; for the Synagogue was not yet a Church, and Christ was not yet the Bridegroom: the Humanity was not yet assumed, much less was it anointed with the Divinity.

In the Adamic Church, the marriage union was of the Lord with the affections, and thence with the intellect of the Church. In the Noachian Church it was of the Lord with the intellect, and thence with the affections. In the Jewish Church it was of the

* *True Christian Religion*, art. 782, 247.

Lord with neither; and hence there was no marriage: there was only an external bond of union through the medium of obedience to external precepts, statutes, and judgments. In the Apostolic Church there was a resuscitation of the union which distinguished the Noachian Church; and, in the Church of the Future, will be more fully developed the marriage union of the Lord as it existed with the Adamic Church.*

We have now traced the religious consciousness of the Church from the first to the last of the Divine Dispensations: we have seen what the Church has been; and are the better enabled, therefore, to judge of what the Church now is.

To sum up our remarks in the words of the *Apocalypse Explained*:†

"The quality of the Divine Providence of the Lord in so revealing Divine Truths, may be seen from the Churches which have been successively established.

"There have been several Churches in our earth one after another: there was the Most Ancient, which was before the Deluge; there was the Ancient, which was after the Deluge; then the Hebrew; then the Israelitish; after this was the Christian; and now commences the New Church. Inmost Divine truths were revealed to those of the Most Ancient

* *True Christian Religion*, art. 109, 782, 786.

† Art. 948.

Church; but exterior Divine truths were revealed to those of the Ancient Church; outermost or ultimate Divine truths to the Hebrew; and at last to the Israelitish; with which Church at length all Divine truth perished, for at length there was nothing in the Word that was not adulterated. But after the end of that Church, Divine truths interior were revealed by the Lord for the Christian Church; and now truths still more interior for the Church which is to come. Those interior truths are what are contained in the spiritual sense of the Word."

"From these considerations it is evident that there hath been a progression of Divine Truth from things inmost to ultimates; thus from wisdom to mere ignorance; and that now is effected a progression thereof from ultimates to interiors, thus from ignorance again to wisdom."

From the remarks we have made, you will perceive, that we cannot say with an eminent Professor of the present day*—"Turn to any book of systematic divinity, and you would suppose Adam's fall was the subject of the Bible, the very ground of Law and Gospel. Surely such a divinity requires reformation."—If, as he says, the Articles of the Church of England have been hitherto "wisely,

* *Claims of the Bible and Science*, by the Rev. F. D. Maurice; p. 117, 119.

piously, and significantly silent" upon the subject of the Inspiration of the Scriptures; surely the time has now arrived when that silence must be broken; when the Church must speak out. If she does not; if she attempts to silence a positive infidelity by a negative theology; if, heedless of the Divine voice which, as of a trumpet, is speaking to her in these Last Days, her own divines begin to doubt whether the Lord be indeed in His Holy Temple, and allow those doubts to grow into convictions in the public mind; we will not deny that, amid secondary questions of disendowment and disestablishment, she may be a divinely-appointed witness to the truth of that which is written—

"*And Jesus went out, and departed from the Temple.*"

No external ritual, no denunciations, depositions, excommunications, can ever suffice as a genuine substitute for the spiritual interpretation of the Word of God. If that substitute be attempted; then, amid the confusion of tongues destined to arise,—the thunderings, and lightnings, and voices, that is, the ratiocinations of the human mind,—we can only say with an ancient expositor on Psalm lxxiv. 2:—

"*Memor esto Congregationis tuæ quem possedisti ab initio, id est, primitivæ Ecclesiæ;*

"*Renova, Domine, in Ecclesia statum antiquum.*"

APPENDIX.

Page 29.

Gen. ii. 19, 20, "And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would *call* them; and whatsoever Adam *called* every living creature, that was the *name* thereof. And Adam *gave names* to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field," etc.

Taken in the literal sense, this might imply that a phonetic language then existed; but, in this instance, we have to think of a period when there was open intercourse with heaven. According to the *Arcana Cœlestia,* art. 2179—"The men of the Most Ancient Church, by reason of their communication with spirits and angels, and having visions and dreams continually like those of the prophets, knew instantly thereby what was signified by any beast, as soon as ever the idea was presented to them. From them first arose representatives and significatives; which continued long after their times; and at length were held in such veneration by reason of their antiquity, that books were written by mere representatives; and the books which were not so written, were held in no estimation, yea, and accounted of no sanctity if written within the Church. Hence, and for other

mysterious reasons, the Books of the Word were so written." See also *Apocalypse Explained,* art. 650.

Psalm cxlvii. 4, "He telleth the number of the stars; He *calleth them all by their names.*" So also *Isaiah* xl. 26. In these instances, by *calling them by their names,* is not meant literally calling by names, but knowing their natures and qualities. Since therefore the origin and quality of things were anciently implied in their names, nothing else was meant, in the most ancient times, by *calling by name,* than to signify such origin and quality. In this sense the expression is used in *Isaiah* xlv. 4—"That thou mayest know that I the Lord, which *call thee by thy name,* am the God of Israel." So again in *verse* 4.

Thus the men of the Most Ancient Church thought, at first, from the objects of nature as hieroglyphics, not from artificial or conventional signs; just as Daniel in his dreams and visions, chap. vii. and viii; as also John in the *Apocalypse,* chap. xiii. and *passim.*

How long this primeval state lasted, we have at present no means of knowing. For anything Swedenborg has said upon the subject, Linguists and Geologists may propose any periods they can justify; without interfering with anything he has stated.

After the formation and growth of phonetic language, the expression *calling by name* had both a natural and a spiritual sense; as where our Lord says, *John* x. 3—"The sheep hear His voice, and He *calleth* His own sheep *by name.*" Sheep, in that day, many of them at least, might individually be called by certain names; just as dogs and horses in the present day. But in relation to the sheep of the Good Shepherd, the expression *calling by name,* signifies only a loving knowledge of their nature and quality.

On these grounds, we dispense with the objection of the *impossibility* of Adam giving names to every animal—especially the objections derived from zoological considerations. It is owing to the loss of all knowledge of the original language of Correspondence, that the Scriptures are, for the most part, at this very day involved in such obscurity.

Page 80.

From Brucker's *History of Philosophy*, vol. ii., we learn that, p. 138, prior to the appearance of the Gnostic heresies among the Christians, a system well known by the name of the Ancient Philosophy existed in the East—a system more ancient than the Grecian philosophy, and commonly understood to have been taught by Zoroaster. If (p. 139) all the systems of philosophy distinct from the Grecian sects, which became famous in Asia or Egypt, particularly the Egyptian, Cabbalistic, Gnostic, and Eclectic, be compared; there will be found among them a wonderful agreement with the general principles of that system which we call the Oriental Philosophy; whence it seems perfectly reasonable, to admit the existence of this Philosophy as a common source, and to make use of it as a universal key to unlock the mysteries of the rest.

Upon these grounds it is concluded, that the Oriental Philosophy, as a peculiar system of doctrines concerning the Divine Nature, originated in Chaldæa, or Persia; whence it passed through Syria, Asia Minor, and Egypt; and mixing with other systems, formed many different sects. There seems also to be sufficient ground for referring the formation of the leading doctrines of this philosophy into a regular system, to Zoroaster; whose name the followers of this doc-

trine prefixed to some of their spurious books; and whose system is fundamentally the same with that afterwards adopted by the Asiatic and Egyptian philosophers.

Among the branches from the Zoroastrian stock, we must reckon the Gnostic heresies which arose so early in the Christian Church. Zoroaster himself is not regarded as the author of the Oriental Philosophy, but rather as a collector or compiler, like Enoch; and as reducing into one the various systems which were extant in his time, with a view to the reformation of the schools of the Magi. These systems were themselves descended from others which had prevailed in times still more remote. Indeed the Jews professed to trace their Cabbala from Moses upwards to Abraham, Seth, and Adam; and we are told that the similarity, or rather the coincidence of the Cabbalistic, Alexandrian, and Oriental Philosophy, leaves us little room to hesitate in pronouncing the latter the parent of the former.

We are further told by some (p. 156), that the Jews borrowed their Cabbalistic system from Egypt. But how came it to Egypt? It is said to have travelled thither from Chaldæa or Persia. But, according to Swedenborg, these were among the central regions of the Adamic Church. He says (*A. C.*, 4964, 6692) that Egypt was one of the countries in which prevailed the Ancient Church; and in which the science of Correspondences, which is the source of all allegory, was especially studied. This science passed onward from the Adamic Church through various nations, and endless stages of corruption, till it deteriorated into the Ancient Philosophy, the Cabbalistic system among the Jews, and the Gnostic system among the Orientals; all being but corruptions of one primitive system of true philosophy; one principle pre-eminently common to all, being that of allegory.

Dr. Kalisch would identify the typical explanations in the New Testament, especially the Epistle to the Hebrews, with the Cabbalistic system of interpretation; and through the Cabbalistic, with the Gnostic. Hence he consistently regards the teachings of Christianity, in this respect, as an incredible system of reveries.

In respect to the influence of Gnosticism upon the doctrines of the New Testament, Mr. King observes in his work on the *Gnostics and their Remains* (p. 4), that St. Paul sometimes "uses the very terms of Gnosticism; as when he says, 'Ye were dead in error and in sins: ye walked according to the Æon of this world, according to the *archon* that has the domination of the air.' Here we have the Devs and Klippoths of Zoroaster and the Kabbala; whose hosts fill the air, deceive mankind, blind their understandings, and lead them into temptation. Again, where he adds, 'We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the dominations, the powers, the lords of darkness, the mischievousness of spirits in the upper regions'—all these are terms of Gnosticism, and originated in the notions of the Kabbalistic theology."

In common with others, the same author (p. 7) refers to the mention of *the Word* in the Zendavesta; and in p. 12 to *the Word* or *Logos* in the Kabbala. He ascribes to the Zendavesta (p. 9) the origin of the belief that Elias shall first come and restore all things; and further says (p. 10), that the Book of Daniel bears the most evident traces of the Kabbala. One rule, says he (p. 5), "always observed by the historians of Gnosticism, is to represent it as a mere offshoot and corruption of Christianity; invented, usually out of disappointed ambition, by apostates from the religion as established in various Churches by the Apostles: a representation than which nothing can be more false."

As to the word *Pleroma* in the New Testament, it is well known that this word held a conspicuous place in every system of Gnostic theology; and Dr. Burton affirms that there are good reasons for supposing that this was one of the notions for which the Gnostics were indebted to Oriental philosophy.

The idea of emanation was common both to the Kabbala and the philosophy of Zoroaster; as also speculations concerning the origin of matter, and the origin of evil. In their expositions of these and other cognate subjects, the ancients gave names to abstract qualities, and thus personified them; as in the case of the personification of *Wisdom,* in the Book of Proverbs. In this way a Cosmogony was converted into a Theogony; as Dr. Cudworth remarks in his Essay on the *Intellectual System of the Universe,* vol. i., p. 482, 490, etc. In the *Arcana* there is a similar remark, art. 1756. "Even profane writers in those early times used this method of framing historical relations; extending it even to things appertaining to civil and moral life; composing them in such a manner, that nothing contained in them was true exactly as it was written; but, under the things literally mentioned, something else was understood. This they carried so far as to represent certain *affections* as *gods* and *goddesses;* to whom the heathens afterwards paid divine worship."

What were thus originally mere personifications, came afterwards to be mistaken for distinct personal beings; and hence one principal source of the corruptions transmitted in the Oriental Philosophy and the Kabbala. See Dr. Burton's *Bampton Lectures,* p. 51, etc., and *notes* 25, 36.

Nevertheless, Dr. Burton observes p. 52, that it has been a fair and rational conclusion of learned men "that *there was once a pure Cabbala;* that is, there were some genuine

unwritten traditions; and there was a sober and rational mode of allegorizing Scripture: but in both these points the later Jews sadly departed from the simplicity of their fathers. In both these points there was a striking resemblance between the Cabbalists and the Gnostics." According to this account, if there was once a pure Kabbala, there was once a pure Gnosis; and for the same reason, there was once a pure Ancient Philosophy: a statement which is in harmony with that of Swedenborg, and which supposes a true doctrine concerning the origin of matter, the origin of evil, the laws of gradation, emanation, correspondence, etc.; in fine, a pure philosophy on those very subjects upon which Swedenborg has written; so that in fact his philosophy would be only a resuscitation of the most Ancient Philosophy, just as his interpretations of the Word are only resuscitations of the wisdom of the Ancient and Most Ancient Church. Certainly if the Church, in the last days of the present Dispensation, is to receive an accession of light to enable her to understand the mysteries of Scripture, as ancient writers in the Church have asserted; it is both consistent and reasonable to presume, that this additional light will be a revival of that of the Adamic Church; in which case, Theology would make an advance corresponding with that of Modern Science; and the Church be endowed with the celestial wisdom she enjoyed in the beginning, combined with all the natural truth derived from the progress of Natural Science.

Page 181.

In the treatise, *De Eruditione Interioris Hominis,* by Richard of St. Victor, this dream of Nebuchadnezzar is treated of at large in its moral and spiritual aspect. Its

popular historical application, although not called into question, is made subordinate to its moral and spiritual import; and accordingly the gradations from good to evil, from an interior to an exterior life, are said to be designated first by *gold,* as signifying *charity;* next by *silver,* as signifying *truth;* next by *brass,* as signifying counterfeit religion, or an *empty sound;* next by *iron* as signifying the *strength* of undisciplined passions; and lastly, *iron and clay* as signifying a mind in *contradiction* with itself. It is interesting to compare the spiritual interpretation of Richard of St. Victor with that of Swedenborg; and the reader will see how the latter is far more distinct and explicit; while the former asserts and confirms the general principle of interpretation. Richard of St. Victor regards the *Statue* as illustrating the deterioration of spiritual life in the individual man; Swedenborg, as illustrating the deterioration of the spiritual life in every individual Church, or in the Catholic Church in general, or in each of the successive Churches from the time of Adam: so that the *Image* or *Statue* is a universal type of the process of deterioration.

It should, however, be observed that on *Ezekiel* xxii. 18, "*Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace: they are even the dross of silver*"—the *Postills,* etc., of De Lyra, accompanying the *Glossa Ordinaria,* apply it to the deterioration of the Christian Church; and state that, in the time of the primitive Christian Church, these metals implied excellent qualities in Christians; but that now they are all turned into dross. The crisis at which the Church had arrived by *gradual deterioration,* is referred to as illustrating the meaning of Scripture. The following are only a few out of many examples, which are made use of for this purpose:—

Isaiah, chap. i. 8, "'*The daughter of Sion,' i. e.,* the Church, '*is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city;*' these all are forsaken by their guardians as soon as the dues are collected; and thus the rectors of churches, as soon as they have got their money, care little or nothing for souls. '*Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant,*' that is, had left us some good people in every state of the Church, by whose good deeds the others are sustained, '*we should have been as Sodom, and like unto Gomorra,*' that is, we should have been totally destroyed. '*Hear the words of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom.*' The wickedness of the clergy having been first described, the remedy is here subjoined. First of all, the one which is deceptive is excluded; which consists in the performance of divine duties out of perverted motives. '*Hear the word of the Lord,*' is the first thing that is said in *Ezekiel* xvi. 35. '*This was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom.—Pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.*' Now these are the vices which reign in the clergy. Morbid voracity, arising from excessive and luxurious feasting, which is meant by fulness of bread; because in Scripture, by the term *bread* is understood food of all kinds; and by *idleness* is signified inactivity in the discharge of duty; as well as cruelty toward the poor, who are the real owners of the goods of the Church, after leaving to the ministers of the Church convenient food and clothing."

Luke xxii. 24, "'*And there was a strife among them which of them should be accounted the greatest.*' A similar strife is frequently created in the Church for the acquisition of dignities; not only among the secular but also among the

regular orders, who are in possession of wealth. They contend like dogs, in order to obtain a bone well supplied with flesh and marrow. Indeed, in this case, the religious mendicant orders seem to be viler than dogs; for they contend for the various offices of presiding over others, when there is nothing else pertaining to these stations but trouble and drudgery. To repel such ambition the Saviour adds, 'But ye shall not be so.'"

Lamentations of Jeremiah, chap. i. 1, "'*How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! how is she become a widow!*' Concerning the allegorical Jerusalem, which is the Church militant, be it known; that it has much declined from its first perfection both in prelates, clergy, and the religious; as also in princes and in the laity subject to them. In like manner, it has in modern times much fallen off in the number of the faithful. For Africa, which was at one time filled with Christians (at least for the greater part), is now inhabited and possessed by infidels. Greece has become schismatic; and the whole of the Holy Land is trodden under foot by Saracens. It is also said that Armenia has been subjected to them afresh, not only in regard to the giving of tribute, but in regard to the reception, at least to a considerable extent, of the Mahomedan law; which is matter of great grief to all Christian people. For with respect to the Christians which remain, although there are many of the Church in number, yet relatively there are but few in number and in moral worth. For this reason we must take up the lamentation and say, '*How doth the city sit solitary;*' that is, the Church which is called a city; for through the concord of charity there ought to prevail unity among the citizens; but now, by the permission of God and the procuration of the devil, the Church is, as it were, solitary,

in comparison with past times; and is rent asunder by mutual dissensions and wars."

Jeremiah, chap. xxxiii. 4, "'*For thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning the houses of this city, and concerning the houses of the kings of Judah, which are thrown down by the munitions, and by the sword.*' By the *city* is meant the universal Church militant, of which it is said in *Rev.* xxi., 'I saw the holy city Jerusalem.' The '*houses of the city*' are the particular Churches diffused throughout the world. The '*houses of the kings*' are the lay courts. These are thrown down. For in the Churches, as to a great part, the worship of God is neglected; and in the lay courts justice is frequently subverted. The *munitions* are the aliments by which are signified the teachings of Holy Scripture, which for a great part have perished. For most of our teachers teach boastful and useless things in order to shew themselves off; and many preachers preach for gain or to win the good opinion of their auditors; and hence they either pass over in silence, or else palliate, the vices of those who are in higher station."

2 Kings, chap. xii. 7, "'*Then king Jehoash called for Jehoida the priest, and the other priests, and said unto them, Why repair ye not the breaches of the house?*' etc. For Jehoash commanded that the house of the Lord, which was in a ruinous state, should be restored; by which is signified the restoration of the Church militant in respect of those things which will obviously fall to ruin, unless a remedy be applied."

Lamentations of Jeremiah, chap. iv. 6, "'*The iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the sin of Sodom, which was overturned in a moment, and there were no hands to stay it.*' The Church deplores the sins of the people as

if they were greater than the sins of Sodom. For we see that faith and justice have left the earth; humanity and benignity are no more; discord and concupiscence stalk through the world; there is a devouring flame of anger and ill will; the Church is desolated by rapine and fraud; the poor are robbed of their very bones; the whole earth lies a waste overrun with briars; the rights of law are accounted as fables; things divine and human, justice and injustice, are confounded with each other; and innumerable evils accumulate daily. The whole of life's duration is but a moment; and through our daily sins we are in that moment being penally overthrown: our deserts are still worse, and we are but treasuring up for ourselves wrath in the day of judgment."

Amos, chap. v. 1, "'*Hear ye this word which I take up against you, even a lamentation, O house of Israel. The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise: she is forsaken upon her land; there is none to raise her up.*' By the lamentation which God raises over the fall of the house of Israel, is signified, that the fall of the Church militant is to be lamented; for both among the people and the clergy it is signally declining from the perfection it acquired in our forefathers. And this is to be lamented most especially, because there appears to be no remedial means of raising it up again to its first state."

Lamentations of Jeremiah, chap. iii. 48, "'*Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people.*' '*Oculus meus:*' hoc exponi potest de insolentia clericorum, ut dicat Ecclesiæ: '*Oculus meus deprædatus est animam meam.*' Oculus Ecclesiæ debet esse clerus qui tamen deprædatur castitatem mulierum, quasi ubicunque est habitatio clericorum. Et quia inde surgit in-

famia clericorum subditur—'*Aperuerunt super nos os suum omnes inimici,*' nam inde infamatur Ecclesia. '*Formido et laqueus,*' scilicet habitatio mulierum cum clericis; '*facta est nobis vastatio,*' scilicet omnis boni. '*Divisiones aquarum deduxit oculus meus in contritione filiæ populi mei.*' Hoc dicitur in persona cujuslibet fidelis de diffamatione Ecclesiæ dolentis."

Cardinal Hugo in his Comments on Scripture, *Ed.* 1669, of which the title-page says that it is "An admirable work, very necessary to all preachers and professors of Sacred Theology;" published "*Cum approbatione et permissu,*" observes on *Psalm* xxxvi. 25, "*I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.*"—"It is the Church that is speaking; or the prophet in the person of the Church in general. The Church therefore says; 'I was young, because in the time of Abel I was but a little child;' when as yet she had no paps, to enable her to preach (to give milk). But in the time of the Apostles she acquired adolescence; because she was warm, fair, and fecund. But now she is a frigid and wrinkled old woman. For *I now am old;* Matt. xxiv. *Iniquity shall abound; the love of many shall wax cold.* Job xvi. 8; 'My wrinkles testify against me.' And although I have lasted so long, says the Church, nevertheless I have never seen the righteous forsaken by the Lord; *i.e.*, finally, or perhaps as an ecclesiastical body *(corporaliter)*, for a time; according to what is said in *Isaiah* liv., '*For a small moment have I forsaken thee.*'"*

Micah,† chap. iii. 5, *et seq.*, "'*Thus saith the Lord con-*

* The six volumes *folio* of Cardinal Hugo are almost replete with denunciations against the state of the Church.

† From the *Postills* and *Moral Reflections* of De Lyra accompanying the *Glossa.*

cerning the prophets that make my people err,' etc. Ver. 6, '*Therefore night shall be unto you that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you that ye shall not divine:*' i.e., the darkness of ignorance, of tribulation and distress: the dark punishments of Hell. '*And the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them:*' that is, all knowledge of truth, and all the brightness of prosperous times, shall fail from among them. '*Then shall the seers be ashamed and the diviners confounded;*' that is, visited with the utmost confusion. Here the mode of speaking is changed from the second person to the third. Ver. 7, '*For there is no answer of God;*' that is, there is their own word, but it is one which is rather their own figment. Ver. 8, '*But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.*' Here the prophet condemns all the rulers in common: by the prophet is signified the faithful preacher; therefore it is said, '*But truly I am full of power;*' faithfully to denounce the sins of the rulers; whence it is added, '*to declare unto Jacob his transgression;*' that is, to the proud man who is in power. Jacob is interpreted the supplanter. '*And to Israel his sin;*' that is, the proud clergy, and also those whom they frequently appoint as judges in the secular and ecclesiastical courts; therefore it is added, ver. 9, '*Hear ye heads of the house of Jacob, who abhor judgment and pervert all equity;*' that is, who abhor the execution of justice. Ver. 10, '*They build up Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity;*' by Zion is signified the Church; by the metropolis Jerusalem is signified the regal court. Ver. 11, '*The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord and say,*

Is not the Lord among us; none evil can come upon us.' They will lean upon the Lord, promising Divine protection, but falsely. Ver. 12, '*Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.'* Literally so. Because of the sins of the rulers of the Jewish people, Jerusalem was destroyed. And in like manner, because of the sins of the rulers of Christian people, the Church is in great part spiritually destroyed, and also as a body of people it is much diminished; for in Africa and Judæa very few have remained Christians, and it is said that in Armenia also the numbers are diminished."

There are clergy in the present day who have attempted to give the same character to the Church of the Reformation, which is here given of the Catholic Church before the Reformation; and who prefer the latter to the former; though what advantage they gain by it, is not easily seen. It is, however, easy to see the reason of the old saying—*Si De Lyra non lyrasset, Nunquam Lutherus saltasset.*

The practice of illustrating the meaning of the Old Testament by a reference to the actual state of the Catholic Church, seems to have much declined after the Reformation; probably in consequence of the use which would have been made of it by the Reformers; and it must have been a positive relief to the Church of Rome to find Reformers abandoning the allegorical, and confining themselves to the literal interpretation of Scripture; because then the denunciations of evil could be referred back to the Jewish Church, and be confined to the period of that Church only; just as the gold, silver, brass, iron and clay of Daniel's image might all be referred to the political kingdoms of the world and the misdeeds of Antiochus Epiphanes; without the slightest

application to any actual deterioration of the state of the Christian Church. It seems in these days to be forgotten, that many of the most cutting things which Cardinal Hugo and De Lyra had said of the state of the Catholic Church, and which undoubtedly promoted the Reformation, were actually derived from a typical and allegorical interpretation of Scripture.

With regard to the Statue mentioned by Daniel, and consisting of a series of deteriorating metals, Richard of St. Victor, so far from transferring his attention to political events which took place between two and three thousand years ago, and occasioning critics to controvert the truth of the prophecy; observes—"In order that I may present in a few words a general idea of the object of this *Dream*, the prophet seems here to point out, by a mystical vision, how it comes to pass that virtuous men gradually decline; and what are the degrees of deterioration by which they fall into the lowest depths; and by the visitation of grace, sometimes rise again to their former, or even to a better, state of mind."

What Richard of St. Victor here applies to the individual man, Swedenborg applies to the Church.

The *Infancy* of the Church, says Cornelius à Lapide, begins with the birth of our Lord and ends with the Ascension. The *Youth* of the Church begins with the day of Pentecost, and ends with the Age of the Apostles. The *Manhood* of the Church begins with the end of the Apostolic age and extends to the Council of Nice. The *Old Age*, or decline, of the Church begins with the time of the Council of Nice, and extends downward from that period to the present day. This succession of the Ages of the Christian Church, described by this Commentator, is much the same with that which is

pointed out by Swedenborg. (See Cornelius à Lapide upon the *Canticles*). This is a sufficient answer to the statements of Mœhler; the whole of whose argument on this subject is but a refutation of the phantoms of his own brain. (See his *Symbolism,* vol. ii., p. 312).

FINIS.

ERRATA.

p. 100 (Note), for *builders of a new and holy world*, read, *holy founders of a new world.*

p. 113 (heading), for *Heavenly Father*, read, *Heavenly Teacher.*

p. 155, line 11 from the top, for *Divine properties*, read, *Divine and Human properties.*

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